

4374. a b.

Imprimatur,

Ab. Campion,  
R<sup>mo</sup> D<sup>no</sup> Arch. Can.  
à Sacris Domest.

Feb. 12<sup>o</sup> 1672  
Ex Ædib. Lamb.





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*Amyrant (Moyse)*  
K A

# DISCOURSE

CONCERNING THE

## Divine Dreams

MENTION'D IN

# SCRIPTURE,

TOGETHER

With the Marks and Characters by  
which they might be distinguish'd  
from vain Delusions.

In a Letter to Monsieur Gaches,  
by *Moses Amyraldus*.

*Sam Henrich*

Translated out of French, by *Ja. Lowde*,  
Fellow of Clare-Hall in Cambridge.

L O N D O N,

Printed by *A.C.* for *Walter Kettilby*, at  
the Bishops-head in S<sup>t</sup> Paul's Church-  
Yard. 1676.

THE BRITISH MUSEUM

CONTAINING THE

Divine Dreams

MENTIONED IN

SCRIPTURE



by John Hunter to the British Museum  
by John Hunter

Printed by J. Smith, Strand, London

LONDON

Printed by J. Smith, Strand, London  
1795



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TO THE  
Right HONOURABLE

JOHN,

Earl of Bridgewater, Viscount  
*Brackley*, Baron of *Elsemere*, Lord  
Lieutenant of the County of  
*Bucks*, and one of His Majesties  
Most Honourable *Privy Council*.

MY LORD,

THE first Fruits, by  
the Law of *Moses*, were due to  
God, yet is it no violati-  
on now of the Laws of  
A 3 heaven,

*The Epistle Dedicatory.*

heaven, in some proportion, to shew our just esteem of those who are so much like it here on earth: Hence it is that I presume to Dedicate these my first endeavors of this kind to Your Lordships Patronage and Protection; and I could wish that the first productions of Art and Study were like those of Nature, that is, the best and most perfect in their kind, that so the Present might more resemble it's Patron.

*The Epistle Dedicatory.*

I do not present this to Your Honor, as if you stood in need of Translations, for in this respect You perhaps are the most improper Person in the Kingdom to make such Dedications to, being Your self so Great a Master, not only of the *French*, but also of the more Ancient and Learned Languages. But I look upon my self under some obligation of justice, to return that to Your acceptance, which was the re-



*The Epistle Dedicatory.*

sult of some few hours,  
which I should have  
counted stoln from Your  
Lordships Service, but  
that such is your Candour  
and benign Temper, such  
Your great love and affe-  
ction to all commendable  
Studies, that You and they  
seem to have the same  
Ends, and the same Inter-  
ests; thus what ever time  
is employ'd in them, You  
are pleas'd to look upon it  
as spent in Your own Ser-  
vice.

But this is not all the  
right

*The Epistle Dedicatory.*

right You may justly challenge to this Translation, Your Title to it seems yet more particular; wherein such was your Favour and Condescension, that, as it would be Ingratitude to conceal, so would it be almost Arrogance to acknowledge them; wherein (pardon the pride of the expression) I had the Honour to be instructed by Your Lordship in the *French Tongue*; You being pleas'd, not only to peruse, but in many places to

*The Epistle Dedicatory.*

to Correct it, so that I cannot now so properly challenge any thing therein my own, as the Imperfections.

And now I hope you will pardon this my innocent Ambition, if I desire to publish my Gratitude, and that sense of my Obligations, which is too big to be confin'd in a private breast.

How acceptable this Treatise may be to the World, I know not, yet this I know, that I should  
have



*The Epistle Dedicatory.*

have sufficiently oblig'd  
the Age, if in the Dedicat-  
tion I had given it Your  
Lordship's just Chara-  
cter; this being the most  
probable way to provoke  
men to the love and imi-  
tation of Vertue, not to  
represent it in Idea and  
Speculation only, but as  
it appears both more  
amiable in it self and  
more prevalent on others,  
when thus incorporated  
in the lives and practices  
of Noble Persons: But  
this though a true and  
just

*The Epistle Dedicatory.*

just Relation, would be as  
uneasie for You to hear, as  
it would be difficult, yea  
above the power of my  
Pen to perform : Thus a-  
mong other things, Your  
own Temper concurs in  
this, to make You Heroi-  
cally Vertuous, that is, a  
follower of Vertue mere-  
ly for Vertues sake, since  
Your modesty will not en-  
dure the common & cheap  
Reward of a due Praise  
and just Commendation.

But yet I could wish  
that I had not so much to  
plead

*The Epistle Dedicatory.*

plead for the seasonableness of the Discourse, in an Age where Infidelity on the one hand, & Fanatical Enthusiasm on the other, seem to divide the greater part of the World; where some men look upon all Divine Revelations to be mere Dreams, others mistake their mere Dreams for Divine Revelations : Now what more proper and seasonable in these circumstances, then that which is the design of this Discourse,  
that



*The Epistle Dedicatory.*

that is, to evidence the  
Grounds and Reasons  
why we receive those  
that are truly Divine, and  
reject the vain pretences  
of others?

And to whom could the  
Dedication be more suit-  
able than to one whose  
Principles and Practices  
at once confirm and adorn  
the Religion you profess;  
whose well-fettled judg-  
ment, and understanding  
of Your Religion in ge-  
neral, and Your great af-  
fection to the Church of  
*Eng-*

*The Epistle Dedicatory.*

*England* in particular,  
render You equally di-  
stant from the Superstiti-  
on of the Romanists, and  
the Novelties of later En-  
thusiasts?

My Lord, I shall not  
any further by a tedious  
address misemploy those  
precious minutes, which  
are usually spent either  
in Your serious and pri-  
vate Studies, or in more  
publick Employments: I  
shall only beg, that God  
would long continue You  
amongst us, and bless  
Your

*The Epistle Dedicatory.*

Your endeavours in settling and securing the Kingdom by Your Counsel, and supporting the Church by Your constant Affection; which is the hearty Prayer of

*Your Humbly*

*Devoted Servant*

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**Ja. Lowde.**



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THE  
PREFACE  
TO THE  
READER.

I Shall not go about to make any tedious Apologies for the publication of this Treatise, being conscious to my self of the innocence of my intentions, that, however I may be mistaken in my apprehensions, or have fail'd in my design, yet I did intend herein, not to offend, but to serve thee; for I am not of the temper of those, who would rather commit a deliberate crime, then want an occasion

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sion of Apologizing: the reasons then inducing me hereunto were principally these two:

1. Because those who have not stock enough of their own to trade withall, are not altogether unserviceable to the Commonwealth, by becoming Carriers and conveyers of other men's goods; and Translations, I conceive bear some resemblance hereunto, and if it be for the benefit, and advantage of a Kingdom, to bring in the Riches of Forreign Countries, then certainly can it not be disserviceable to the Commonwealth of Learning to make the works of other Nations intelligible to our own, and whatever Law there may be in particular against other things of the French Nation, yet there is none against the Importation of their Learning.

2. This Treatise, if we consider the whole

whole Series and Method of it's management, seems a sufficient vindication of the sober use of Reason in matters of Religion; if we reflect upon those natural and necessary deductions which the Learned Author makes from certain and undoubted Principles, and those other rational motives of credibility, which he makes use of, to prove those dreams he there treats of, to be truly Divine.

Yet not so as to exclude that secret sense and inward consciousness, which was the immediate result of the Divine Impression made upon their minds by the Spirit of God, especially in those dreams and visions, where particular and personal commands were convey'd to any of his Servants, as to Joseph to convey our Saviour into Egypt.

But here I am very sensible that this reason of its publication, viz. the



asserting the use of Reason in matters of Religion, will by some be thought rather fit to have prevail'd with me to have let it laid still buried in its Native French, lest by this means the contagion should still further prevail in the English Nation.

How far an extravagant opinion of the power & extent of Reason may have possess'd some, I know not, yet this is certain, that we must not therefore wholly reject it, because others have overvalued it, or by some other ways abus'd it; we must not forbid our selves the use of fire & water, because some have employ'd both to their own ruine: For by this way of arguing, we must bid Adieu not only to Reason, but Scripture too, which has been abus'd, not only by great pretenders to Reason, but by ignorant and unstable men, to their own destruction.

But

But then if we would either prevent the rise, or stop the growth of any such opinions amongst us, the way to do it, I conceive, is not to suspect our friends, (such who are not only free from error herein, but also very able and willing too, to defend the true Ancient Catholick Faith in this particular) not, I say, to suspect our friends, but so to treat our open and profess'd enemies; the Socinians, in such a sound way and Method of proceeding as may be the most effectual to convince them, or however to secure ourselves; that is, First, with strength of Reason; Secondly, with Candor and Ingenuity of Temper.

1. With strength of Reason, thus to baffle them at that weapon, which they pretend to be so much their own, though in deed and truth, they cannot lay such a just claim & undoubted title

to it, for in many things they perhaps are the weakest arguers of any sort of men whatever; yet seeing they are such pretenders to it, we must deal with them accordingly, by the strictest and severest methods of reasoning: for a good cause cannot suffer more, then either by too violent an urging of weak arguments, or an unskilful managing of good ones; and a weak defence, like a cold petition, is its own answer, and a kind of giving up the cause we pretend to plead for, besides it brings a disreputation to truth to see its Patrons and Defenders worsted.

In order therefore to our more successful proceeding herein, in all Personal disputes with these Adversaries, they ought not to demand, nor should we grant them any other part, then that of an Opponent, and the reason is, because ours is the Ancient Truth,



Truth, which has been in the possession of the Church long before their opinion was ever thought of, and therefore we must be suppos'd in rightful possession of it, till the contrary be prov'd: which they will be never able to do, seeing their great Art and Policy consists rather in evading the force of our arguments, than in trusting to any of their own.

I speak not this, as if our Christian Religion, was not as well able to confute its adversaries, as to defend it self, provided only that they would but acknowledge so much reason and ingenuity, as not to look upon frivolous evasions for solid answers, which if they do, they then seem to labour of a certain weakness of mind, something like that of Scepticism, only the Scepticks they deny or doubt of every thing, these by the like unreasonable principles,

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principles, do or may assert any thing,  
and thus in stead of being what they so  
much pretend to be, such Masters of  
Reason, they hereby destroy the very  
foundations of all rational discourse.

2. We should treat them with all  
Candour and Ingenuity of Behaviour,  
for our Reasons and Arguments will  
be then the more likely to convince  
their understandings, if withall we  
endeavour to oblige their affections,  
however not provoke their passions.

‘ Thus ’tis verily thought, that Arrius  
‘ had never rais’d those tempestuous  
‘ storms w<sup>ch</sup> we read he did, If Alex-  
‘ ander, the first that oppos’d the Ar-  
‘ rian Heresie, had carried himself  
‘ with more moderation, and been less  
‘ eager in so good a cause.

And having gone thus far in an-  
swer to the objection, give me leave  
to enquire a little further into the me-  
rit

rit of the cause ; what there is in Reason so destructive of Religion , that the very name of the one should seem heretical in the other ; what is it wherein Reason hath so highly offended, that it should be excluded the Temple, and from having any thing to do in matters of Religion. Doth that Religion, which once commanded us to give a reason of the hope that is in us, doth it require nothing now, but blind obedience ? Was Reason requir'd, as it were in the very infancy and first ages of the Church, and is it now become useles, nay dangerous in its riper years ? Is that which is the imperfection of old age, viz. the weakness of our intellectuals, is it now become the perfection of our faith ? The Heathens indeed, they look'd upon a Prophetick fury and alienation of mind to be either a necessary concomitant or



a certain effect of their inspiration. The Turks they look upon mad men and fools as the only Prophets and men inspir'd, and we know what Church it is that asserts ignorance to be the Mother of Devotion: But we have not thus learned Christ; for our Religion doth not go about to build the Christian upon the ruines of the Man, nor do we then cease to be Rational when we become Religious, Religion being founded, and as it were grafted upon the stock of Reason. Thus the Moral Law is either the same with, or founded in the Light and Law of Nature; and the Christian Law, though it be above them both, yet is it not contrary to either.

Thus Reason and Religion do friendlyly agree, and mutually conspire to support each other; for Religion improves Reason, and Reason thus improv'd

improv'd and enlightned; defends Religion; and as on the one hand the mysterys of our Faith are so far from being any real ground of an objection against it, that indeed they render it more Divine and Venerable; for we might perhaps justly question the Divinity of that Religion, wherein we see nothing above the power of a finite understanding, either at first to find out or afterwards to comprehend; so on the other hand the sutableness thereof to our rational faculties in other things, is no less a commendation and confirmation of it: for to say that God should institute an unreasonable Religion, is such a foolish assertion as needs no confutation; for certainly God would either have given us a Religion sutable to our Faculties, or Faculties sutable to our Religion.

If it be here objected that God and  
Scrip-

Scripture condemns Reason, and that  
it doth not become us to dispute against  
the expresse Commands of God; To this  
I answer, that Scripture doth no where  
condemn that Reason which I here  
plead for; but all those places which  
they urge against it, may and must be  
interpreted either concerning the Tra-  
ditions of the Jews, or the doubtful  
and disputatious Philosophy of the  
Gentiles, either of the Science falsely  
so call'd, which the Gnostics so boast-  
ed of, or of meer Natural Reason, as  
such, destitute of Divine Revelation;  
Or, lastly of the carnal Appetites of  
Christians, of the *φρόνημα σαρκός*, that  
Law of the members warring against  
the Law of the mind. Secondly by Reason  
we know the Scriptures to be the Word  
of God, and by Reason we come to the  
true meaning and sense of them, and  
by Reason we know the obligation that  
lies



lies upon us therefrom, and without this it is not easie to conceive a way how God could either have convey'd the knowledge of his Will to us, or of our Duty to him; and it is not probable that Scripture should condemn that, without which all its own commands would signifie very little or nothing.

I shall here therefore briefly enquire into the nature of Reason, both as it was in innocence before the Fall, and as it is now in this state of depravation; for the want of a right distinguishing herein hath been the cause of many errors and mistakes about the power and properties of it; however 'tis that which must needs cause a great deal of obscurity in what is said concerning it, in this complex'd and undistinguish'd capacity.

And this is that which seems  
the



knowledgment of the Divine Wisdom in matters of speculation, and yielding obedience to his will in matters of practise.

Now did right Reason enjoy an universal, and undisturb'd Empire, now was there not that contrariety in the faculties of the soul, but what was Knowledge in the understanding immediately became Obedience in the will and affections; now was Reason and Righteousness, as it were the very complexion of the man; nor was there any further need of Supernatural Grace to be superadded to him, besides what was naturally contain'd in these Essential Principles of his constitution, which made him such as God design'd him, viz. a Man in Innocence.

This was the state of Reason before the Fall and it yet remains the same in substance, though not in the same degree of



of purity and perfection, as before; it is the reliques of the Divine Image, yet remaining in us, by which we are still enabled in some measure to understand truth and practise our duty; it is that power or faculty of the soul, or the soul it self, as it contains in it the principles and foundations of ratiocination, and a power and ability of drawing right consequences therefrom, but yet so obscur'd and weakned, that there is now need of Divine Illumination and assistance for the performing of that which before we were able of our selves to do: But then though God did thus punish man by taking away part of that strength which he had so misemploy'd; which was the effect of his justice, yet did not his goodness suffer him to sink below himself, though he became weak and guilty, yet he remained a man; his faculties, though

though deprav'd, yet were they not annihilated, and as the Principle is not wholly taken away, so neither are the Acts and Exercises thereof necessarily false; so that we are not abandon'd to an eternal Scepticism, but we have still sufficient grounds of truth and certainty within our selves, for we had better have no such faculties as pretend to Reason, then such as should always deceive us even in things that we clearly and distinctly perceive. And here may be as strong arguments drawn from the goodness of God, that the punishment of the first sin did not extend to an absolute falsification or total corruption of our faculties, as there may be from his veracity, that he gave us true ones at first; for indeed to assert Reason thus wholly corrupted, would be to introduce such a confusion and disorder

into the nature of things as is inconsistent with the notion of a Providence, such an one, as we should think that God would rather have annihilated the whole race of mankind, then ever have suffer'd it in the world.

And this is the true State of Reason in it self before the Fall, and as it is in us now since, only here we must further know that this natural Faculty of Reason in Christians is further enlightned and inabled by the Divine Revelation of his Will, and by the assistances and influences of his holy Spirit.

I could wish therefore that those men would speak more intelligibly, who go about to give such particular & distinct differences betwixt the Spiritual and meer Rational Man, as they call him, in their Actions relating to Religion, as if there was any Character either  
more



more certain in it self, or more war-  
rantable to us, to judge of the Spirit  
of God in a man by, then by it's pro-  
ducing the effects of Righteousness in  
him; That the Principles of Natu-  
ral Reason and Grace are two di-  
stinct things, flowing from different  
Fountains, is certainly true; but then  
why we should oppose these two, especi-  
ally in a Christian State, where God  
is never wanting by his grace to assist  
the humble and sincere exercises of  
Mens Reasons, where the more truly  
Rational any Men are, the more  
Spiritual they are, and the more Spi-  
ritual the more truly Rational; here  
actually to distinguish betwixt the  
Spiritual and meer Rational Man,  
when the same effects of real Righte-  
ousness equally appear in both, this is  
arrogantly to take upon himself  
that which is only proper to

God, to be a searcher of hearts.

As for that place of 1 Cor. 2. 14. upon the misunderstanding whereof they seem principally to found this their opinion, but the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discern'd; here by the Natural Man is not meant the Christian Rational Man, but a man endow'd only with the Principles of Natural Reason, void of Evangelical Grace and Divine Revelation; now this cannot be apply'd to a Christian who enjoys both in their respective degrees: so that the true meaning of that place is briefly this, 'That the  
' matters reveal'd in the Gospel and  
' Preach'd by the Apostles were such,  
' as the Learned Philosophers of the  
' Hea-

Heathens and others, who were only  
led by Humane Reason, did abso-  
lutely despise as seeming foolishness  
unto them, nor could they by any  
Study of their own come to the  
knowledge of them, for they were  
only to be had by understanding the  
prophecies of Scripture, and other  
such means as depend upon Divine  
Revelation: so that the Christian doth  
receive and believe the Gospel and the  
things therein contained, by argu-  
ments drawn from the Scriptures  
themselves, by prophecies and mira-  
cles and other evidences of Divine  
Revelation afforded therein, and by  
the assistances of the Spirit of God  
deriv'd therefrom, but then this doth  
not exclude but include Reason, for  
grace is not a superaddition of a new  
faculty, but a new power and princi-  
ple to the old.



Now I see no reason, why those who are Baptis'd into the same Faith, and live in the same Christian Communion, and give all due obedience to the Laws of God and Man, according to their power, why any such should be Suppos'd to act from a Principle of meer Natural Reason, and not also from that of a truly Divine, and in its own nature, Saving Grace, and that for no other Reason, but only because some few men, who are highly conceited of themselves, and censorious of others, who pretend to a monopoly of the Spirit, and as it were to a Commission from Heaven to pass sentence on all who differ from them, only because these men are pleas'd to vote whomsoever they will, Formal, Moral and meer Rational Men.

But indeed those who are thus particular in describing how far a meer Rational

Rational Man may go in matters  
of Religion, what sins he may avoid  
and what duties he may perform, and  
yet have nothing of the true Spirit of  
God and Saving Grace; these men,  
however they may pretend and per-  
haps really are great enemies to Pe-  
lagianism, yet they seem herein to be  
too great exalters of the power of Na-  
ture, and in all probability too uncha-  
ritable censurers of Divine Grace,  
whilst they attribute all the good  
works perform'd by those meer Rati-  
onal Men either to the Power of Na-  
ture, or to Common Grace, as they  
call it, which, according to their in-  
terpretation and explication of it, is  
little better, seeing it is neither in it's  
own nature sufficient nor by Gods ap-  
pointment intended to bring any one to  
Salvation; that distinction therefore  
betwixt Common and Saving Grace,

as Grace, doth signifie those inward motions of the Divine Spirit, by which we are enabled to believe and practise aright, according to this acceptation, it hath no foundation in Scripture; for all such Grace is in its own nature sufficient, and by Gods appointment design'd to bring Salvation, if we by our own fault do not hinder the event; though it be granted, that this also may differ in degrees. Among other grounds and reasons of this their mistake, this seems not the least, that they entertain too mean apprehensions of that Covenant which God hath made with Christians and their Children, and also of the Sacrament of Baptism, by which they are admitted members of Christs Church: Yet notwithstanding both these, they look upon a man before a certain critical moment of conversion, as they suppose it,



it, little better then an heathen, and that all the good works that they have or can perform before it, stand them in little or no stead, in order to their Conversion, and that after this, all the wickedness that they do or can commit, shall do them no prejudice in reference to their Salvation, which opinion is of very bad consequence to the concernments of a Christian Life.

But here we must also know, that there is need of a continued course of Sanctification throughout our whole lives, both to compleat and perfect that holiness first begun in us, and also by reason of those many sins and infirmities, which we are all subject to, which are to be turned from by repentance and reformation.

And as this opposition betwixt the Spiritual and meer Rational Man, is without any warrant from Scripture,

ture, so is it very difficult, if at all possible, to assign the exact limits betwixt Grace and Reason in our selves, and then much more in others.

1. In our selves, it is very hard to say that this was an Action of our Reason only, that an Act of the more immediate assistance of the Divine Spirit, Joh. 3. 8. the wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whether it goeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit, thus he that is born anew, is discernably another kind of man then he was before, thus his new birth is seen by the fruits, though the beginnings, and the modes of procedure, and the means of conveying this to him be undiscernable, Mark 4. 26. 27. so is the kingdom of God, that is, the kingdom

dom of Grace; as if a man should cast seed into the ground, and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. These are the more ordinary methods of the Divine Spirit, but then when God calls out some particular persons on some great and eminent employments, either to do or suffer in his service, he frequently confers more sensible influences of his Grace and Spirit on such; Neither is this spoken in the least to oppose the joys and consolations of the Holy Ghost, nor the sober and well-grounded experiences of Pious Men.

And as we cannot distinguish betwixt these in our selves, much less can we do it in others, for if a man be outwardly pious, and give no just occasion of suspecting his real honesty and



and sincerity, whether such an one be notwithstanding an hypocrite, this is best known to God and his own conscience; yet we by the Laws of Charity are to judge the best, but if such an one under all this, be an hypocrite, this is that which a man may also be under the highest pretences to the Spirit; so that it is only the event, that must determine the truth and sincerity of men's professions.

The sum of what I here intend, is this, that, provided we become new men, if we cease to sin and learn to do well, if we turn from wickedness and perform real and sincere obedience to the Laws of God, as the Divine Spirit indeed is, so must it be acknowledged to be the principal cause of this change in us, yet we need not here trouble our selves too nicely to determine the exact limits; how far our  
Rea-

Reason, as a less principal cause either might, or might not be instrumental herein.

But the proper use and just extent of Reason will further appear by considering it's object, which is the knowledge of God and the Divine Will, the knowledge of our selves and the nature of things, so far as these or any of these come under humane cognisance, so far as they are either our perfection to know, or our duty to practise; so that nothing but either the impossibility or the unlawfulness of the enquiry must limit the exercise of our Reasons, thus must we not indulge either an extravagant curiosity on the one hand, nor an idle supine negligence on the other, for it would argue presumption in us to pry into those hidden things which God hath reserv'd to himself, as it would sloth and ingratitude, not make use  
of

of our faculties for those purposes,  
that God design'd them for.

And there have not been wanting  
those who have erred in both ex-  
tremes, first the Pelagians and Soci-  
nians, who make Reason the great  
rule of faith and manners, who scarce  
acknowledge any other authority, or  
ground of their belief, or higher prin-  
ciple of action: others there have been  
who too much undervalue it, and as-  
cribe not only too little to it, but look  
upon it as a dangerous and pernicious  
thing, as if it was the Devils instru-  
ment to undermine the foundations of  
Faith and all true Religion; some in-  
deed have set it in the throne and then  
fallen down in adoration to it, others  
on the contrary have unjustly vilify'd  
that which is indeed a ray of Divinity,  
and I know not whether have been  
more to blame, or done more disservice

to



to Religion, those who have ador'd it as a God, or those who have rejected it as a Devil.

I shall therefore briefly show the power of Reason in some things and its weakness and inability in others, and give some particular instances of both.

1. Reason is a guide to a man in the choice of his Religion in general, that is, supposing an Heathen in doubt of his own and desirous to fix upon the true Religion; here rightly to determine his choice, he hath no other way but to bring the several pretenders to the test of Reason, and examine them by those Rules, that Reason dictates to be the Characters of truth and certainty, that is, by the agreeableness and correspondence they bear to the notions of God and the nature of things, to those inward impressions they have of virtue and goodness imprinted

printed upon their minds, and according as they come confirmed with the outward attestation of true and unfeigned miracles: and here authority, as such, ought not to be urged, nor can it be of any force in this consideration, though it must be also granted, that the concurrent testimony of different parties is very considerable herein, as when the matters of fact relating to our Saviour and his Religion are not only granted, but attested by all parties, not only friends but enemies, when both the Jews and Heathens do grant his miracles; whereas those that other Religions pretend unto, being both in their own nature, more sleight and frivolous, more phantastick and airy, then solid and substantial, and really serviceable to the glory of God and the good of men, in this respect they are less worthy of God and less agreeable

able to the nature of miracles, and also wanting the universality of attestation, they are more liable to cheat and imposture. And here the certain evidence of humane testimony is of more force to convince a man, then the pretence of Divine Authority; I say, then the pretence, for in many it is only so, and that which is real is to him no more, for as yet he doth not believe any of them to be Divine, but from the strength of their respective Reasons and Arguments must conclude them so.

And here the use of Reason will be more particularly necessary to distinguish betwixt true and false miracles, now a miracle being something above the power of natural causes to perform, it will be very difficult rightly to assign the just limits of the power of nature, to be able to say thus far can it extend, and no further;  
c and



and that which still augments the difficulty, is, rightly to know how far the Devils power may extend in things of this nature, whether first he can by his own native power work miracles; which seems not so reasonable to believe he can, for then mankind would almost have laid under a fatal necessity of being impos'd upon by his power and malice, Miracles being as it were the Great Seal of Heaven, which God makes use of to confirm the truth of Doctrines.

But then nothing hinders, but that the Devil may by his knowledge of Nature either so fitly apply natural agents to the producing of such effects, as may require a good degree of Reason and Philosophy to distinguish them from Real Miracles, or may by God, for Reasons best known to himself, be permitted sometimes to work true ones.

Yet

Yet not so, but that upon a strict and due consideration of the circumstances of the Action, or the end and design of the thing, there will something appear whereby to distinguish such a miracle from those which are the more genuine and immediate results of the Divine Power. To this we may further add, that the Divine Providence is particularly concern'd, where there seems as it were a competition betwixt the power of God and the power of the Devil (as in the case of Moses, and the Magicians of Egypt, and in others proportionably) there some ways to appear in confirmation and approbation of the one, and in discovering either the absolute cheats and impostures, or the comparative weakness and imperfection of the other.

The sum of what I here intend is this, that by using our Reason, and the

Rules thereby afforded us, we may distinguish betwixt the delusions of Satan, and Divine miracles, but without this it will be impossible to do it.

2. We should continue Christians upon the same Grounds and Reasons that others first became such, that is, upon a due considering and understanding of our Religion, so that we may both be the more confirm'd in the belief of it our selves, and may be the better enabled to give an account of it to others; thus should we be Christians upon choice and consideration, and not only because it is the Religion of our Country. It is not sufficient for us meerly to be baptised into the Christian Faith, but we must our selves understand and undertake what the happiness of our Birth and Education first Entitled us to.

Yet this is not so to be understood as  
if



if Christians were Sceptically to doubt  
of their Religion, or so far to indulge  
the extravagancy of their enquiries, as  
for the present to suspend the belief of  
their own, and to be in an equal indif-  
ferency to all Religions; yet may they  
piously enquire into the Grounds and  
Reasons of their Faith, being warrant-  
ed herein both from Precept and Ex-  
ample in Scripture.

And as in the other particular, Rea-  
son was necessary to distinguish be-  
twixt true and false Miracles, so is it  
here to judge of Doctrines; that so we  
may preserve that Faith once delivered  
to the Saints free from error or cor-  
ruption either in Principles or Practi-  
ses: and indeed when once we bid adieu  
to Reason, we then open a gate to all  
those errors and fanaticisms, which  
either the malice of the Devil, or the  
impostures of men, or our own cor-

rupt natures may suggest, we deprive our selves of that which God design'd for our defence, and expose our selves naked to the power and malice of our enemies.

3. Reason is necessary to determine the lawfulness of some actions and the expediency of others; for it was impossible for Scripture to descend to all the particulars of humane life, much less to all the circumstances of them: it was sufficient for it to have laid down some General Principles, it being now the Office of Reason to apply particular instances to these General Rules; and that which renders Reason here further necessary, is, because that vertue for the most part consisting in the middle betwixt two opposite vices there is need of a careful and steady attention, lest while we endeavour to avoid the one extreme, we unwarily run  
into

into the other : and here Reason will  
in many cases be very useful to us  
rightly to determine the just limits of  
our duty, only we must not make this  
bad use hereof, always to go to the ut-  
most extent of what is lawful, we must  
not live always upon the very confines  
betwixt vice and vertue; for this would  
be to chuse to walk upon the very brink  
of a precipice, where perhaps we may  
be safe, but the action would never be  
counted prudent. This would be only to  
make use of Reason to teach us how  
little we might be vertuous, and how  
far unwise. And this possibly may be  
one Reason why many times it is so  
hard to assign the precise boundaries  
betwixt vice and vertue, exactly to de-  
termine where the one ends and the  
other begins; because God never de-  
sign'd us to make use of that speculati-  
on, but to keep our selves within the



measures of prudence and safety.

2. I shall shew the weakness and imperfections of Reason, and what those things are wherein it is deficient.

1. It is not in the Power of Reason to have found out the mysteries of our Religion, nor the methods of Salvation, for these do either depend upon the Essential Nature of God, or the free determination of his will: both which are unsearchable by humane Reason.

Whether therefore the Platonick Triad, or the threefold principle mention'd by Plato and his followers, be the same with or may upon just grounds be apply'd to the Christian Trinity, may be justly question'd; for it must be a very favourable interpretation that infers an Unity in the Trinity, and Trinity in Unity from Plato's Principle: yet whatever knowledge he might have of a Trinity, this

this was neither born with him, nor was it the result of his natural reasoning, but it came to him by tradition either from the Jews, or from those who had it thence; as the greatest asserters of the Platonick Trinity do acknowledge.

Whether Orpheus, Trismegist or Plato had indeed any true knowledge or distinct notions of a Trinity, I shall not here undertake to determine, seeing that after the great pains and Study that some men have bestow'd herein, such is the obscurity of those Authors expressions, such the doubtful and various interpretations put upon them by men of different opinions, such the doubted truth and credit of some of those writings, such the loose conjectures rather than necessary consequences made from the whole, that the result of all seems only this,  
that

that possibly it may be thus, and possibly it may be otherwise.

So that I am apt to believe that men do not entertain this or that opinion for the necessary cogency of the Arguments on either side, but according to the agreeableness, that this or that opinion may have to the tenour of their former Studies, and to the Authors they have been most conversant in, or bear the greatest affection for, or for some other collateral inclinations, rather than Reasons of Belief.

I shall therefore on this occasion with all indifferency propose these few considerations, which thou mayst receive or reject, as thou seest convenient.

1. The notion of the Trinity, as relating to the Christian mystery, is much more obscurely express'd in Plato himself, than we find it now  
since



since in his followers, I mean those of the Platonick School, who liv'd after the coming of our Saviour.

For the Trinity, such an one as the Christians assert, could never in all probability have been gathered from what is there said of it, nor could it probably have been concluded to have been Plato's meaning, if the appearance of the Christian Doctrine, had not given occasion and opportunity to his followers to apply his notion of it to the Christian mystery.

2. At or upon the appearance of our Saviours Doctrine in the world, there were two sorts of men, whose interest it might then be, though for different Reasons, to assert & promote the notion of the Platonick Trinity: First, the Platonists of the Age, who might think it tended much to the honour of their Master & his Philosophy to find  
in

in it those mysteries which the Christians look'd upon as the peculiar Characters of their Religion : thus did they vie Platonism with Christianity, equalling it in all things, relating either to Speculation or Practise with the Christian Doctrine ; thus did the appearance of the Gospel in the world rectifie the Philosophy of the Gentiles in some things, and made them ambitious to conform their notions to the Christian Religion, as far as they thought convenient, in others.

Another sort of men who might promote the belief of the Platonick Trinity were profess'd Christians, yet such as had no mind to believe any thing of this Christian Mystery ; and these men boldly asserted that the Trinity was only a Pagan notion brought out of Plato's School into the Christian Doctrine : Thus did they endea-

your

vour to disparage what they had no mind to believe, but yet withal suppos'd that it was in Plato, thinking it a sufficient Argument, either of it's falseness or unfitness to be made part of the Christian belief, because the notion (say they) was taken from a Pagan Philosopher.

3. Whether might not the Providence of God be some ways concern'd herein, either by occasioning or permitting such expressions in Plato, as might afterwards be made use of, though not for the proving of the Trinity, yet for the facilitating the reception & belief of it among the Gentiles.

I shall not here Dogmatically assert any thing, nor shall I oppose the opinion of the Traditionists; yet I think we need not too operously contend for it nor lay more stress and weight upon that Argument, then the evidence thereof



thereof will bear, because the Christian Trinity doth neither depend upon, nor stand in need of it: As for the inability of Reason to find out those methods of Salvation now reveal'd in the Gospel, I shall have occasion to mention it hereafter.

2. The mysteries of our Religion, as they could not be at first found out, so neither can they be now fully comprehended by Natural Reason, and this is that which Reason it self acknowledges, that it is not in the power of a finite capacity fully to comprehend the mysteries of an infinite Being; yet are these very mysteries so far as necessary to be believ'd in order to Salvation, sufficiently intelligible, being so far clearly laid down in Scripture. But then we must not place our own private fancies or the doubtful and controverted opinions of particular men  
in

in the number and rank of Divine mysteries, thus coining more out of our own brains, then God and Scripture ever made. Thus a late Author hath rank'd Reprobation and absolute Decrees, in an equal order with the Trinity and Incarnation: but if all the unintelligible opinions, which have been broach'd of late years, must be receiv'd as Divine Mysteries, what a monstrous thing would Religion by this means soon appear?

Nor doth the belief of this particular hinder us from making the mysteries of our Religion as reasonable and as intelligible as we can, provided only, that we do not make Reason the Rule and Condition of our believing them; we must not reject what we cannot fully understand, this is both the fault and folly of the Socinians, for herein they shew themselves neither sound  
Divines

Divines nor good Philosophers; for 'tis probable that if they had been more conversant in Philosophy, they would not have so err'd in Divinity; if they had a little tam'd and corrected the extravagancy of their own conceited abilities with the difficulties of Philosophy, and a little more us'd their understanding to the obedience of nature, they then would not perhaps have thought it such an unreasonable thing to submit to that of Faith, for what an affront is it both to Reason and Religion to be so credulous as to believe things altogether unintelligible in Philosophy, and yet be such Virtuosi in Religion, as to believe nothing but what is capable of demonstration, or within the compass of our faculties to comprehend.

Here we may further defend the mysteries of our Religion, not only from  
the



the Authority of the Speaker, in as much as it is very reasonable to believe, what the God of truth reveals, but also by such subsequent illustrations as may at least facilitate our apprehensions of the thing; and this is that which Athanasius his Creed makes use of, as the reasonable soul and body are one man, so God and man are one Christ; here we may also make use of those Arguments which are call'd argumenta ad hominem, that is, we may consider whether those respective persons, we then deal withal do not believe some things altogether as unaccountable as those things they charge upon us. Thus the heathens have no Reason to object against us the credulity of believing upon bare Authority, seeing the Pythagoreans in particular did look upon Pythagoras his *αὐτὸς ἐπὶ* almost of as great Authority,

as the Christians do their sic dicit Dominus, and generally all Sects of Philosophers did jurare in verba Magistri, did yield great honor and obedience to their respective Founders, nor have they any Reason to object the unconceiveableness of the Trinity and Incarnation, seeing they believe things concerning their gods altogether as unintelligible as these Christian mysteries.

And to come a little nearer, the results of the Divine Omnipotence and Omniscience, how God can create something out of nothing, and how he can know the free determinations of our secret thoughts, and these not only present but future, all which is notwithstanding part of our natural Creed; this perhaps is as unconceiveable as any thing that is contain'd in our reveal'd Religion.

3. It is not in the power of meer  
natu-

natural Reason to perform the precepts of the Christian Religion without the concurrence and assistance of the Divine Spirit. Here for a man to deny either the being of God, or the operations of his Spirit in us, is (to use a familiar resemblance) as if we should deny a sharp Razor to have an edge, because we cannot see it, whereas indeed the very invisibility of it is an Argument of its being; or as if we should deny any motion in the world, because we cannot explain the communication of it, though here as in the other, the visibility of the effects doth sufficiently prove the truth of both.

There are some who argue the duty incumbent on us to believe the Christian Religion, from the benefit that accrues from it to mankind, making this the foundation of their argument, that men naturally ought to believe that w<sup>ch</sup>



is for their advantage : how far this is true, I shall not here enquire, yet this is certain, that where we have all the Reason in the world to believe a thing, and none to oppose it, where God makes that our duty, which is also our interest; there to deny or disbelieve such a thing, is not only to act against our selves, but to fight against heaven: & of this nature is the belief of the Divine assistance. Such is the amiableness of the Divine Nature, that some are of opinion, that if the Atheist did but frame a notion of it, though he could not believe that there was a God, yet he must necessarily wish there was one; so here such is the advantage that accrues to us from the belief of this Divine Assistance, that, methinks, those very men who deny it, ought notwithstanding to believe it, in order to their own designs of acting to the utmost extent of the powers of nature,

ture, for they might more vigorously exert these, if they liv'd under the imagination at least, that they had a greater power then their own concurring with them.

As for that controversie concerning Grace and moral Vertue, if the question be first clearly stated, and the sense and acceptation of the words justly determin'd, and then the thing calmly discours'd without the heat of contest and disputation, the difference betwixt the contenders on either part seems not so great, but that it seemes easily reconcilable.

Here Grace may be consider'd in a double sense, either first as it signifies the Divine Assistance, that inward root and Principle of all Christian Vertues and Graces; or secondly, as it signifies the fruits and effects of the Spirit, the Christian Graces themselves, as now

reduc'd into acts and habits: In this latter sense Moral Vertues, as to the substance and matter of them, are the same with Christian Graces, they differ only in the principle from whence they flow, thus the Christian Vertues and Graces spring from a more Divine Original, then the Moral Vertues of Heathens. In the first sense there are none, but profess'd Pelagians, that assert morality or moral vertue, in opposition to or derogation from the Divine Assistan-  
ances; but those who perhaps by some are now thought too great friends and Patrons of it do mean and intend nothing of this by it.

That which hath render'd this question more obscure and intricate, is, that they are not rightly agreed about the sense and meaning of the word morality; some say that by morality is properly meant such a degree of vertue  
and



and honesty as is attainable by the mere strength of nature, without the advantages of Divine Revelation ; others by morality seem to understand not only this, but also include in it all the assistances and encouragements that attend Christianity. Whether is the properer acceptation of the word I shall not here enquire ; yet however those who take it in this latter sense cannot be thought to ascribe too much to the power of nature, only they include more in the sense and meaning of the word so taken, then perhaps can properly belong to it.

I shall here only add one consideration, which refers to Reason in matters of Speculation, and so put an end to this digression.

'Tis this, that it no ways reflects dishonourably upon Reason, that it is not in its power to convince a Sceptick,

Scepticus nec potest alium redarguere nec ipse redargui, and the Reason of both, is, because he neither asserts nor grants any Principles whereby he may either prevail upon others, or he himself be confuted: Scepticism is a capricious phrensie of the mind; and it tends no more to the disreputation of Reason that it cannot cure it, then it doth to the dishonor of Grace, that it doth not always captivate the perverse wills of wicked men.

But there are degrees in this Sceptical humor, and we then seem to retain some Tincture of it, when we unreasonably and immoderately undervalue and enervate those Arguments which natural Reason, brings for the proof of some of the Articles of our natural Religion, viz. The being of God and the Immortality of the Soul, Revelation indeed hath advanc'd these to  
higher

higher degrees of certainty, then before they had; but I see not how it tends to the advancement of the Honor of Divine Revelation, by too rigid, if not Sceptical, denials to invalidate all those Arguments that Reason may suggest in proof or confirmation hereof. Reason, me-thinks, here should not be treated as an enemy, but rather help'd and encourag'd then discountenanc'd in so good a design; we should rather procure and maintain a certain rational tenderness and modesty of mind, whereby we should be asham'd either to assert or deny any thing upon unjust grounds; and this temper of mind is equally distant from a vain credulity on the one hand, and an unreasonable demanding of demonstrations in matters incapable of them, on the other, it assents not to things on weaker grounds then Reason may justly require, nor doth it re-  
quire



quire more evidence then the nature of things, and the nature of men are capable of.

But I must remember that I write a Preface, not a Treatise, I shall now only premise something concerning the Nature of Prophesie and Divine Revelation in general, and so refer thee to the following discourse for further satisfaction.

An operose attempt to prove that which no sober and considerate man ever went about to deny, would rather weaken, then add any strength to the thing design'd; yet I could wish that either the affectation of singularity, or a more pernicious design of some in this present age had not render'd the proving the truth of Divine Revelation (in opposition to those who would ascribe all propheſie to some lower principle) not altogether unnecessary.

It

It is indeed both unjust and uncharitable to suggest unreasonable surmises of the possible intentions of an Author contrary to his express words; only here give me leave to shew the Reasons why it may be suspected that the Author of *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*, notwithstanding what he there speaks of it, yet may indeed assert no other Prophecie or Revelation, then what is within the power of nature to perform.

1. In his sixth Chapter, he absolutely denies all miracles in general, & then it is very inconsistent with, and naturally consequent upon this his principle to deny this of prophecie in particular. The opinion of miracles according to him, is founded in the ignorance of natural causes, since nature never goes out of her fix'd order and settled course, whatever we may weakly or ignorantly

norantly conceive of it, now according to this way of arguing, prophesie may as well be the result either of blind chance or natural causes, though such as are not commonly known, as other miracles. Now the nature and notion of a miracle, doth as well belong to the certain Prediction of future contingencies and the declaring and revealing things naturally unknowable, as it doth to those things which leave more immediate and sensible effects behind them: and if God by such an eternal decree hath so fix'd the course of nature, that it can no ways now be alter'd, then prophesie must run the same fate with miracles, and he that denies one, if he be consistent with himself, must deny both.

2. He tells us, that God may reveal by way of prophesie such things as we already know by the light of nature, that which I here take notice of, is not  
the



the falseness of the assertion, but only that he doth nowhere plainly and clearly tell us, whether the prophecies contain'd in Scripture, be above the power of nature or no, or whether they may not naturally follow from such a System of the world as he supposes.

3. He himself doth sufficiently explain his own opinion herein towards the end of his first Chapter; Deniq; Prophetæ Dei spiritum habere dicebantur, quia homines causas Propheticæ cognitionis ignorabant eandemq; admirabantur, & propterea ut reliqua portenta, ipsam ad Deum referre, Deiq; cognitionem vocare solebant: where-in he positively resolves prophecie, as well as other miracles, into natural causes, though such as are unknown to us.

My design here will not give me leave fully to examine his opinion either

ther concerning miracles or prophesie, only I shall observe in general, that it is but a very weak way of arguing, which he there uses, viz. That because God sometimes makes use of natural causes, or the accidental ministry of some other means in working of miracles, therefore to ascribe the whole causality or efficiency to those things which God for other Reasons thought fit to employ on those occasions, thus he asserts Moses his throwing Ashes into the Air, to be the natural cause of the Biles that thereupon befel the Egyptians.

Thus also because God makes use of the phansy in the conveying of prophesy, therefore must it wholly be subjected here and reach no farther, therefore he concludes that the Prophets prophesied according to the various temperaments and complexion of their bodies, and some Prophets were more obscure in  
their

their prophecies then others, because their phansy was not so good, nor their imagination so strong as the rest.

But this kind of Reasoning seems much what like that of the man who speaking of the miracle of Christs feeding five thousand with five Barly-loaves and two fishes, Joh. 6. 10. gave this account of it, that what they wanted in meat, they made up with grass, because it is there occasionally said, that there was much grass in the place.

Prophecy in the notion of it, may include those two things, 1. A prediction of future contingencies, a foretelling, not only the τα ἐσομένα, but the τα μέλλοντα, not only such things, the events whereof depend upon the natural and necessary connexion of causes, but such as come to pass by the free determination of Mens wills and though  
the



the proper nature of prophesy doth not consist herein, yet is it a certain character of a true Prophet, where it doth occur, for it is not in the power of any lower principle certainly to foretel such things.

2. Prophesy more properly implies the Communication of the Divine Will to men, and that with this particular design, to instruct and inform the world in things of great concernment; for there may be private notices and personal commands convey'd from God to Men, which yet are not sufficient to denominate them Prophets.

Prophesy in the first sense doth suppose the being of God to a Christian, and proves it to an heathen, for there may as strong an Argument be drawn from the punctual predictions of future contingencies in all the particular Modes and Circumstances of them, to  
prove

prove a Divine Being, as there may from the regular order and constitution of the universe; for it is as impossible certainly to foretel things to come in that very way and method wherein they happen without Divine Revelation, as it would have been for the world to have reduc'd it self into this stately frame by the fortuitous concourse of Atoms.

And as prophesy proves the Being of God, so the being of God proves at least the possibility of prophesy, si dentur dii, datur divinatio, says Cicero, and the consequence is good and valid; unless with the Epicureans, that granting a God we deny his providence, and the government of the world by him: Prophesy and Divine Revelation being one great instrument which he makes use of herein, and indeed it would have seem'd a great defect in providence to have created such a Noble Creature as Man, without a way of communicating suitable notices to him,

as the conveniencies or necessities of things might require.

Thus the Stoicks argue in this case, if, say they, there be Gods and yet they do not declare to men future events, then either they do not love men, or they know not themselves what will come to pass hereafter, or they think it nothing concerns men to know, or they think it inconsistent with their Majesty to do it, or lastly they know not how to communicate this their knowledge to others: but all these consequences are false, therefore the Being of God proves such a kind of prophesy or divination. This argumentation of theirs refers to prophesy in the first sense, but it would be more strong and undeniable if from thence we infer'd the being of prophesy in the latter; that is, the Revelation of things much more considerable then the meer knowledge of future events; for he that denies prophesy in this sense, must either grant all those false  
and



and unworthy consequences before mention'd, or some of these, which are as false as the other, either first that God hath declar'd his whole Will by the Light of Nature, so that nothing more remains further to be reveal'd; or Secondly, that nature hath declar'd enough, and that there is no need of any more; or Thirdly, that it is inconsistent with the free determination of the Divine Will to make any further Revelation, then what nature hath already discover'd.

But now this kind of Prophecy or Divine Revelation was both necessary in respect of man, and no ways contrary to any resolution of the Divine Will, 1. It was necessary, because all the several Religions that ever appear'd in the world, either really had, or at least pretended to Divine Revelation, now things being in this posture at our Saviours appearance in the world, it was necessary that his Religion should have the truth of that which many

of the others only pretended to, both to free Christians from the danger of being seduc'd by the false pretenses of others, and also fully to assure them of the truth of their own Religion.

Not though as if the false Oracles of the Heathens did first occasion that Revelation that was truly Divine, for this had always a precedency in nature to that which was false and counterfeit; thus God first gave the command to Adam not to eat of the forbidden fruit, before the Devil ever tempted him thereunto.

And the reason of that resemblance, which we sometimes find betwixt Sacred and prophane Rites, is not, that God took occasion from them to institute the like amongst his own people; but because the Devil, being Gods Ape, doth many times either pervert Divine Institutions to Superstitious or Idolatrous purposes, or erect something of the like nature of his own to keep some in the belief and practise  
10 of

of the false Religion, and to seduce others from the true one, so that it is no ways inconsistent with the subtilty or malice of the Devil, but rather highly promotive of both, to borrow some Divine Rites and Sacred Institutions and insert them into his own Worship.

And it seems more probable, that the Egyptians here borrowed from the Jews, then the Jews from the Egyptians; for notwithstanding the great hatred which they bore to the Jews, yet they might imitate them in some part of their Religious Worship, and that not out of any love they had either to them or their Religion, but that they might the better secure some of their own people in their Idolatrous Worship, who perhaps had entertain'd too great an opinion of some of the Jewish Ceremonies, or that by this means they might some other ways more effectually manage their malice against them; but whatever was the first occasion or original of the Devils Oracles, yet this is certain, that at Christs appearance in the world, they had very much prevail'd in the Heathen Nations; and therefore it was necessary that  
Christ



Christ should both silence these, and institute a more certain method of Divine Revelation of his own.

1. Revelation was necessary to assure the world of Gods reconciliation to mankind, and upon what terms and by what methods we may attain Salvation: for though the Divine Goodness be as knowable by the Light of Nature, and as easily apparent in the notion of a Deity, as any other of it's attributes of Power and Justice; yet being conscious to our selves of daily offending God; and guilt being naturally full of Jealousie; We could not be so fully assur'd of Gods mercy without such a Revelation, having forfeited the effects thereof, as to our selves, and however though we might have some notions of Gods parability and willingness to pardon, yet we could scarce have imagin'd that his mercy would have extended thus far, not only to pardon our sins, but also to confer upon us such a degree of happiness.

Nor doth their way of reasoning seem cogent and necessary, who tell us that Natural Reason leads us to a Mediator, and that such an one, as God indeed has appointed to be God and Man: God, say they, is perfectly

fectly just and perfectly merciful, and being just he must condemn all mankind, because sinful, but this would be repugnant to his mercy, which must also be perfect with effect, now seeing the perfection of these two attributes of justice and mercy may consist in God together, and since this cannot be, unless God doth satisfie, and Man do suffer, therefore Reason dictates such a Mediator, as is both God and Man.

But this is a Post-nate way of arguing, found out since Gods Revelation of his Will in this matter, for where did ever appear any such way of reasoning amongst the Heathen Philosophers, or any others, before Gods declaration of it; so that all that can follow hence, is only an agreeableness of the Divine Methods of Salvation, here made use of, to Reason, not any ability in Reason to prove that the things ought to be so, Antecedent to the Revelation.

2. This Argument doth suppose or endeavours to prove the Incarnation of Christ, knowable by the Light of Nature, which is so far from being true, that it is not fully and clearly conceiveable how it could be done, even now when it is reveal'd; there are indeed some instances in nature which  
seem

seem to facilitate the belief of the Incarnation, thus what is man, but as it were a previous Essay to the Incarnation? being compounded of Principles as far distant as Heaven and Earth, of Soul and Body: but then this is only an illustration of a truth already reveal'd, not any Antecedent Argument to prove it.

I might easily enlarge further on this subject, but I am very sensible that I have already transgress'd the due limits of a Preface: the ensuing Treatise will be a sufficient demonstration of the other particular, viz. That Divine Revelation is no ways contrary to the free determination of the Divine Will, it being that which God hath promis'd in general, and particularly by this way of Dreams and Visions.

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### Errata in the Preface.

b Page 7. for might or might, read may or may. c p. 3. line 10, after particular, insert, actions. d p. 6. l. 15. read consistent. pag. 7. for Biles, r. Boyls. p. 3. l. 13. for seems, r. is.

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### Errata in the Book.

Page 17. l. 5. for leave, r. bear. p. 17. l. 16. for your, r. the. p. 20. l. 19. for that, r. the. p. 25. l. 3. for that, r. their. p. 41. l. 17. insert the. p. 44. l. 23. for it and its, r. their. p. 58. l. 10. insert and. p. 118. l. 11. r. phrenses.



A  
DISCOURSE  
CONCERNING  
Divine Dreams.

THE INTRODUCTION.



Most Honoured Brother,

I Doubt not but you remember the conference we had, as we went to Councillor *Amproux* his lodgings: one of our Discourses was concerning the Nature of those Dreams which God sometimes sent unto his Servants, and particularly concerning the marks and characters, by which they might know them to be truly Divine. For as much as you found a great deal of difficulty in that matter, I should have been glad if we had discours'd  
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2 *A Discourse concerning*

further upon it. But the night came on, and obliged you to retire to your lodgings ; and *Mademoiselle de la Suze*, who staid for me in another place, and I went also to ours, we had some discourse in our return concerning it, and she desir'd me (according to my ability) to illustrate and explain what did seem more obscure and difficult in that subject, which she thought worthy of a more attentive consideration. I bestow'd some thoughts upon it in my journey, and if other affairs had not prevented me, I had e're this committed them to Paper : But if my occasions, which are at present so urgent, and importunate do permit, I will do it : and I here begin this little work in midst of their disturbance, on purpose to engage my self to a necessity of finishing it, that so I may send it as a testimony of that respect which I bear you, and of that singular esteem which I have of your rare qualities, and of the Honour of your Friendship.

CHAP.

## CHAP. I.

*Of natural Dreams and their several Causes.*

**T**Here are three kinds of faculties in man, which are subservient to him, both in acquiring and preserving knowledge, viz. the External Senses, which are as it were, at the one extream; the Understanding at the other; and the Internal Senses in the middle betwixt these two. The impression of external objects made upon the Corporeal senses is not call'd by the name of Dreams, seeing it is made upon us waking; neither are the ratiocinations of the understanding call'd Dreams, because Dreams are form'd in some of those faculties, which are common to us with beasts, to whom also, as to dogs and horses belongs the power of dreaming: so that it necessarily follows,



4 *A Discourse concerning*

lows, that that impression, wherein the nature of dreams doth consist, must be made in the internal senses. Now these are commonly accounted three, the *Common Sense*, the *Phantasie*, and the *Memory*: all which three, some do think to be but one and the same faculty, but diversly considered according to its divers modes of acting upon its respective objects: others do distinguish them as different faculties *in themselves*, and not only in their operations. I shall here follow this latter opinion, both as more universally receiv'd, and more fit and proper for the explication of that which I here undertake, and shall assert, that dreams are not made in the *common sense* or *sensus communis*, because that doth not act, but when the external senses are awake: nor to speak properly, are they made in the *memory*, because the *Idea's* of things there are only in *Potentiâ*, and when they are reduc'd into *Act*, do then pass into the imagination or phansie

## Divine Dreams.

phanſie. But the images whereof dreams are form'd, are in *Act*, as we ſay, and therefore muſt neceſſarily be in that part which we call the *Phanſie*; to which all the world do more generally agree. That impreſſion then (which is the cauſe of dreams) muſt be refer'd to one of theſe three cauſes, *Nature*, *Angels* or *God*; and accordingly there can be but three kinds of dreams, *natural* and *ſupernatural*; and theſe, ſuch as proceed either from the operation of *Angels*, or ſuch as are more purely *Divine*.

As for natural dreams, they may be divided into four Claſſes, (1.) there are ſome which are to be imputed to the mere temperament of the body, or to the Conſtitution wherein the perſon that dreams, chances to be, when he has ſuch or ſuch viſions. For Example, thoſe who are of an hot or Cholerick conſtitution, or at that time have their Stomachs overcharged with Choler, they commonly dream of fire; thoſe who are

6 *A Discourse concerning*

are naturally Phlegmatick, or who then chance to abound with Phlegm, do dream of ponds and rivers, and inundation of waters: and it is proportionably the same with others, according to the diversity of their constitutions. And although experience shews this to be true, and that Physicians do take indications from dreams, whereby to judge of the temperature of the body, yet the reason, why it is so, doth not so easily appear. I shall briefly offer something, as a reason hereof, as I pass along, though my design doth not at all oblige me hereunto: it is this, I think we may truly assert that the operations of our *outward senses* do convey into our memory the *Idea's* of all sensible things, which are there preserv'd upon all occasions; and that it is from thence that the subject-matter of natural dreams is taken. For if we could imagine a man to have liv'd to the age of twenty five years without any use of his *senses*, we must also  
imagine



## Divine Dreams.

7

imagine him to have liv'd so long without ever dreaming, in as much as he had not the Idea of any sensible thing in his memory ; since also it is certain that in sleep the natural heat is more intense in the inward parts, as the liver, the heart, the diaphragm, and in all those parts that surround the Stomach : Hence it causes vapors to arise into the brain, which on the one hand are hot by the heat they draw from their cause, that rais'd them ; and on the other hand retain something of that humour, which is more universally predominant in the temperature of the body, or more particularly in the stomach, whether it be *Choler*, or *Phlegm*, or *Blood*, or *Melancholy*, which are the four usually here taken into consideration ; according therefore to the heat of these vapors, so they put the *Idea's* in the memory into motion, and reduce them into *Act* in the imagination ; and as they retain something of such or such an humor, so they affect the

8 *A Discourse concerning*

brain, & particularly that part which is the seat of the *phantasy*, with the quality of that humor from which they proceed. Now that which produceth the effect, is, that the organ being thus affected, doth better receive the images of those things which do suit with its present constitution, and doth better retain them; whereas those others which do not at all agree therewith are dispersed and fly away: so that if these vapors do arise from a Phlegmatick humour, then the *phantasy* is apt to represent to it self waters and inundations, if from *Bile* and Choler, then fire and burnings; and those other forms of things of a different nature, which the heat had rais'd and drawn from the memory into the *imagination*, slip away and make no abode there. But however it be, that we decide this question, the dreams that proceed from such a cause, can have no other power of signification, but only from the effect to give some knowledge of the  
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cause: The reason hereof is this, because that which produceth them being altogether void of all understanding (for neither the heat, that is in the inward parts, hath any; nor the memory, nor the imagination, and as for the understanding, it is not at all concern'd herein) therefore these cannot be design'd to any particular end.

2. But there are others (which is the second kind of dreams) wherein the temperament, and the disposition of humours have no place, and these proceed from no other cause then the heat, which arising from the lower parts to the brain, doth put the *Idea's* and images of things in the memory into motion, and represents them to the *phantasy*, but in a confus'd and disturb'd manner, in proportion to the greatness of the heat, and according as the vapors, which arise from the stomach are gross or subtle, and as they are more or less abundant, and so accordingly fill the vessels of the brain; for  
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10      *A Discourse concerning*

when they are gross and in great plenty, the images of things recall'd from the memory, are there so swallowed up, that either it presents none to the *fantie*, that it can take any notice of, which is the cause that we then dream not at all; or if it do, yet it is attended with so much weakness and obscurity, that when we awake, we remember nothing of what we dream'd; and hence it is, that some, though very few, never dream at all; because the vapors that arise in their sleep, are always thick and darksome; and hence also it is, that ordinarily we do not dream immediately after meals, for as much as the stomach being then full, doth send up to the brain vapours in too great abundance; but if the vapours be more thin and subtle, if they be in less abundance and more calm, then the images of things do present themselves to the phantie with more distinction, and yet not without a great deal of disorder, for let us  
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suppose the images of themselves orderly plac'd in the memory, yet there are two things that may cause confusion; the one, that the heat that moves them, doth also disturb them, as we see small pieces of matter in a vessel full of water, remain each in its proper place, so long as the water is calm and unmov'd: but if you put fire under it, the water by boiling is put into motion, and the several substances are jumbled together by its agitation: the other, that while the external senses are awake and in action, they govern and fix the phansie by their influence, but when they are laid asleep and the phansie thus more at liberty, there is a great deal of irregularity in all its actions; from hence it comes, that the images, (where-with the memory, agitated by the heat, hath fill'd the phansie) do joyn themselves one to another fortuitously and without order, from whence is form'd an infinite number of phantastical and extravagant com-

compositions : we see the experience hereof in a feaver, when the violence of the heat and the cholerick vapours do disturb the imagination ; and we see it also in *fools*, who though they neither sleep nor are in a feaver, yet have their imagination disturb'd by reason of the distemper of their brain ; which makes them conceive so many Chimæra's and utter such strange inconsistencies, and divers kinds of things, which have no natural connexion among themselves, passing into the phantasie and joyning themselves one to another with a great deal of irregularity ; for the imagination is a faculty, which of it self is able to receive the impression of those *Idea's*, and also joyn them together ; but because it is corporeal and by consequent void of understanding, it can neither perceive their agreement nor their disagreement, nor conveniently dispose of them according to reason : So that it acts here, as a blind man would do,  
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who being among a great number of broken and mutilated statues, should go about rightly to reassemble their parts by groping: for it would frequently happen without doubt, that he would, for example, set *Marius* his head upon *Cleopatra's* body, and put the thighs of a Brasen-horse under the trunk of *Epaminondas*.

And these dreams have yet less power of signifying things to come, then the former; for as much as the composition of the images is altogether fortuitous, and by consequent incapable either to represent any thing, as in an allegorical Emblem, or nakedly and without any such representation to foretel it; for every Emblem and Symbolical representation is the work of an intelligent agent, and the foreseeing things to come requires still more light of reason. 'Tis true indeed, that the understanding sometimes makes some reflexions upon the things thus presented to the phansie  
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14 *A Discourse concerning*

in sleep; for there is this difference betwixt our dreams, and those of Dogs and Horses: those of such animals do not reach any higher faculty, then the imagination, for as much as they have none higher, whereas ours do sometimes affect the understanding; so that we do sometimes make rational reflexions upon those phantasms, and sometimes long discourses, as it frequently happens to those who are accustomed to speak in publick. But then in the first place, it is not the understanding that forms these *idea's*, it only acts upon them, as they are represented by the imagination, so that it cannot give them the least power of signifying things to come; and further how can that which cannot foresee things future, when awake, do it when asleep, and be able to represent them in those different shapes which then concur in the fanſie? so far is it from doing any thing of this, that it cannot pass any rational judgment either of the past or present

sent, of which yet it hath much more knowledge then of things to come, and indeed no extravagance is able then to check or set bounds to our understanding; we raise our friends whom we know to be dead, and discourse with them, as if yet living, we set *Paris* in *Quercy* and *London* in *Germany*, and this without any great wonder to us, we become Beggars and Kings in a moment, nor doth this so strange an alteration any ways amuse us, and there is nothing so phantastical or disagreeable, which doth not thus seem reasonable to us.

3. The third sort of natural dreams are such as proceed from those employments of our life, to which we apply our selves with great intention of mind; for studious men dream of books, covetous men of money, Souldiers imagine they see battalions of foot and squadrons of horse, and generally those who are delighted in any employment dream of things relating thereunto: And  
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16 *A Discourse concerning*

it is not difficult to render a reason hereof, for the images of these things are most familiar to them, and do most frequently occur; so that it is no wonder, if when the inward heat, which is much more intense in sleep, doth move and agitate this store-house of sensible *Idea's*; no wonder, I say, if these do first and more frequently offer themselves, but yet always, almost with the same phantasticalness, as the former, so that we may make the same judgment of both, and believe that they have no more power to signifie things to come, then they had.

4. The fourth kind of natural dreams is that which arises upon occasion of some passion which has either possess'd us, whilst yet waking, and upon which we now reflect being asleep, or such as takes its first rise in our sleep by the motion of the irascible or concupiscible appetite; and here it fares with us almost in the same manner as in those, which

which proceed from the tempera-  
ment of the body and the constitu-  
tion of the humours, for thus it  
presents to our imagination objects,  
which leave some resemblance to our  
passions. Those who are hungry  
imagine they see feasts, and those  
who are thirsty believe they drink  
at fountains. The amorous see  
their inclinations; and the cho-  
lerick the objects of their anger, and  
run to meet their enemies, who pre-  
sent themselves in arms before  
them. But as these dreams have  
without doubt a cause antecedent  
in your passion, so it is certain that  
ordinarily they are no less extrava-  
gant, then the former, nor more  
capable to give any certain know-  
ledge of things to come, nor of  
those very things which already  
exist, if they be altogether un-  
known to us before our dream; for  
the sensitive part of our soul is in-  
deed able to submit to reason, but  
in it self doth no ways partake of it:  
so that it being in its own nature

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18 *A Discourse concerning*

irrational, it is impossible it should produce any thing, which as we said before, requires an intelligent agent for its cause. 'Tis true, sometimes it happens that some of these dreams do come to pass, which makes us think, there is some resemblance or agreement betwixt the dream and the event, and by consequence, that some Angel or Spirit is concern'd therein: But as *Aristotle* has observ'd, this happens by meer chance, as he that without any aim should shoot a thousand arrows, may at last by chance hit the mark: so in our dreams such an infinite number of visions do pass into our imagination, that it is not only no wonder, if one should sometimes chance to be true, but it would be much more strange if once or twice in our life it did not so happen; but if any of our dreams do not only come to pass, but there also be a remarkable agreement betwixt it and the event, and such as that we ought necessarily to suppose the operation



tion of an intelligent agent to intervene, we ought not then to reckon this among natural dreams, but to refer it either to God or to some action of Angels.

## CHAP. II.

*Of Angelical Dreams in General, and some rational reflexions on particular ones.*

Here are two sorts of dreams which we may impute to created Intelligences, the one where the things signifi'd are contained in Symbolical and Mysterious Representations; the other where they are propos'd naked without any such resemblances; as for the first, those who undertake to give rules of their interpretation, do it in two different ways, for they tell us that we ought sometimes to take the direct contrary to the dream for it's interpretation: as if one dream of

20 *A Discourse concerning*

marriages, they say, it is a sign of death; and on the contrary, if we imagine in our sleep that we see Mourning-weeds and Funeral-attire, we shall then suddenly hear of a Marriage; but one may dream of such things without Angels any ways concerning themselves herein, for that the images of those things may remain in the memory, and by the meer force of nature return into the Phansie, when we are asleep; but when any such dream shall happen and it be imprinted in the imagination by the operation of an Angel, we may assure ourselves that it is not a good one that doth it, for they are the *Ministers of God*, who is never that Author of those dreams, whose signification is thus to be read backward, much less hath he established any such rule to interpret them by, and there is not the least footstep hereof either in Scripture or Nature, and there is too much of uncertainty in these interpretations to entitle them to  
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Divine Revelation. And this makes me call to mind that which they report of *Buchanan*, who every year inter-leaf'd his *Almanack* with white paper, and where the *Almanack* foretold *Fair-weather*, he writ over against it *Fowl*, and where it said it should be *Rain* or *Cloudy*, he set opposite to it, a *Fair* and *Clear Skie*, and that after he had observ'd it fifty or sixty years, he said, he always came nearer the truth, then the *Almanack*, but hence it follows not, that those who made *Almanacks*, did design by the contrary predictions those events, which *Buchanan* did thus prognostick, but that the *Astrologers* making for the most part their Prognostications at an adventure, and some of them not having the least knowledge of the stars, it might very well happen that *Buchanan*, thus by chance might foretel fair or foul weather, by taking always the contrary to their Predictions.

But the more common rule of In-



22 *A Discourse concerning*

terpreting of dreams is to observe the agreement and resemblances which are betwixt the dreams and their events; thus they tell us, that he that dreams he hath lost a tooth, shall loose a friend, and he that dreams that a rib is taken out of his side, shall ere long see the death of his wife. I shall not here stay to relate examples of this nature, which have been verifi'd by the event. *Cicero* among others relates this, a certain man dream'd that there was an *Egg* hid under his bed, the Sooth-fayer to whom he apply'd himself for the interpretation of the dream, told him that in the same place where he imagin'd to see the *Egg*, there was treasure hid: whereupon he caus'd the place to be digged up, and there accordingly he found Silver, and in the midst of it a good quantity of Gold, and to give the interpreter some testimony of his acknowledgement, he brought him some pieces of the Silver, which he had found; but the Sooth-fayer  
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hoping also to have some of the Gold, said, *and will you not give me some of the yolk too?* Now these dreams, which we cannot reasonably impute either to natural causes, or to meer chance, yet do they not exceed the power of Angels to convey; for an Angel either good or bad (for I shall not now examine the question, which of the two it is) I say, it is not impossible for an Angel to know that there was treasure hid there. An Angel might also imprint such a dream upon the mans imagination, whilst he was asleep, and also reveal to the Sooth-sayer, that the Egg did signifie a treasure, where there was Gold and Silver hid, or might furnish him with occasions to conjecture so.

There are also some of this nature, which respect the future, which may proceed from the operation of Angels. The Poets say that *Hecuba*, the wife of *Priamus* being with child of *Paris*, dream'd that she brought

24 *A Discourse concerning*

forth a burning torch, upon occasion whereof the Soothsayers did presage, that the Child should be the cause of the ruine of *Troy* and of its conflagration. The Ancient Historians tell us, that the Mother of *Phalaris* dream'd that among the Statues which she consecrated in the house of her Son, she saw that of *Mercury*, who from a bowl, that he had in his hand, pour'd out blood upon the Earth, which boil'd out in so great plenty, that it overflow'd the whole house, which was interpreted and confirm'd by the cruelties of *Phalaris* the most bloody man upon Earth. *Cyrus* in a dream fanci'd he saw the Sun at his feet, and that he thrice attempted to catch it in his hand, but that it always rowling away escap'd him: which the Magicians thus interpreted; his attempt thrice to catch the Sun signify'd that he should reign thirty years, which the event confirmed. These dreams, I say, may proceed from the operation of Angels, for as much



much as the impressi<sup>o</sup>n of these images in the fan<sup>s</sup>ie is not above the Sphere of that Activity; the *Idea* of the Sun is in all mens memorys; and that of burning torches, of Statues and of blood; so that there was nothing wanting in these occasions but to reduce them into the fan<sup>s</sup>ie, and there to put them into a due place and motion.

And as for the prevision of things to come, which Angels would signify hereby, this they can do partly of themselves and their own proper Conjectures, partly by a certain kind of revelation from God. The Devil who seeks all opportunities of doing mischief to the world, had resolv'd to promote and carry on the barbarous humour of *Phalaris* to all manner of cruelties, and seeing the house of *Priamus* flourishing and his state great and potent, he propounded to himself to do all he possibly could to ruine it, and to that purpose to make use of all occasions that presented themselves, and to make

*Priamus*

26 *A Discourse concerning*

*Priamus* his very children instrumental thereunto. And although these were but meer designs, of the event whereof, he could have no certainty, for as much as the will of God and his providence superintends all things, yet he doth not forbear to hope, and to foretel the manner of that thing which he himself designs to do, which God, for reasons best known to himself, would not hinder the ratification of by the event. As for that of *Cyrus*, it was impossible for Angels to Divine how long he should reign, but God suffers sometimes some of his more secret Counsels to appear to the view of created intelligences, and from these radiations which proceed from the Cabinet of the Divine Counsels, they either certainly foresee some things to come, or at least form such reasonings and conjectures as come very near the truth.

Those other dreams which propose things nakedly, as they are in them-

themselves have no need of an interpreter to understand them, but when the event confirms them, they are not therefore the less wonderful. I shall produce two or three examples which seem very remarkable. Two *Arcadian* friends travel'd together and lay one night in the City *Megara*, where the one lodged in a publique Inn, the other in a private friends house, as was usual in those days. After Supper, he in the private house being gone to bed, and asleep, the other appear'd to him in a dream, and pray'd him to come to his assistance, for as much as the Master of the Inn design'd to murder him: the affright of the dream having wakened him, he rose up, but being come to himself he took it for a meer dream and idle vision, and went to sleep again. In his second sleep, the image of his friend came again into his phantasie, and he imagin'd that he pray'd him, that since he would not help him whilst living, yet at least he would not let his  
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28 *A Discourse concerning*

his death go unpunish'd: for that the Master of the house had murther'd him and had cast his body into a Cart full of dung, and desir'd him to go early in the Morning to the Gate of the City before the Cart went out, the man being very much mov'd by his dream rose up, and going to that Gate, there stop'd the Cart loaden with dung ready to pass, whereupon the Carter being frighted, fled away, and the body being there found, the crime was by this means discover'd, the Host punish'd, and all the City struck with admiration at the wonderfulness of the dream.

*Cicero* relates this in the book already cited: See also another taken out of the life of *Monsieur Peiresc*, Councillor of the Parliament of *Provence*. This excellent Personage going from *Montpellier* to *Nismes* lay all night in an Inn, which is the Mid-way betwixt those two places; he had in his company one *James Rainier*, Citizen of *Aix*, who in  
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that journey lodged in the same Chamber with him: as that great man slept, *Rainier* observ'd that he talk'd and mutter'd something in his sleep, otherwise then was usual with him, whereupon he wakened him, and ask'd him what was the matter; Oh! said he, you have made me lose a most excellent and pleasant dream; for I was dreaming, that I was at *Nismes*, and that a Goldsmith shew'd me a golden Medal of *Julius Caesar*, which he would sell me for four Crowns, and as I was ready to give him them, both my Goldsmith and my Medal vanish'd away together by your awakening of me. Being arriv'd at *Nismes* and having not forgot his dream, he went to walk in the City, till such time as dinner was ready, and passing up and down he went into a Goldsmiths shop, to ask him whether he had any rarity to show him, whereupon the Goldsmith answer'd that he had a *Julius Caesar* of Gold; *Monsieur de Peiresc* asking the price



30 *A Discourse concerning*

price of it, he answer'd, four Crowns, which thing did fill the mind of that great person, both with joy and admiration, as well for that he had found a Rarity, which he had long very much sought for; As also for the surprizing, and strange manner whereby it came to his hands.

A third shall be another out of the same book of *Cicero*. *Hannibal* having taken *Sagunta*, dream'd that *Jupiter* call'd him to a Council of the Gods, where *Jupiter* commanded him to carry the war into *Italy*, and that one of that Assembly should march in the head of his Army, and having begun his March under the Conduct of him, who was appointed to be his guide, the guide forbad him to look behind him, but he could not prevail so far with himself, being transported with a desire to know what that was, which came behind him, where he saw a great and terrible beast all compass'd with Serpents, which did  
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wind themselves about it, and where ere it pass'd, it turn'd all upside down, houses and trees, and shrubs, and generally all that ever came in its way: being astonish'd at the sight, he demanded of the god that conducted him, what that Monster signify'd, whereupon he told him that was the ruine and desolation of *Italy*, but as for the rest, that he should not trouble himself with what should come after, but march on without losing of time.

This last dream did certainly proceed from some evil Angel, for a good one would never have sent into his imagination the *Idea* of a Council of false gods. But an evil one made use of the Images of the false Deities, which their Statues, had left in the Memory of this Heathen General, and joyn'd other things necessary thereunto for the perfect constitution of the dream. As for what was foretold of the desolation of *Italy*, it was easie for an evil Angel

### 32 *A Discourse concerning*

to Divine, *viz.* That if this *Carthaginian* Captain did follow the Counsel given him, and enter into *Italy* with a Splendid and Victorious Army, that he would there make very great Desolations. And if the event was answerable and exceeded even what the Devil was able to conjecture, it therefore so happen'd, because God had so ordain'd it in the Counsel of his Providence. The first of these Examples, as it is recited by *Cicero*, may be refer'd to good or bad Angels, (1.) To bad ones, as they had a great Empire among the Heathens, and having had a great part in the design of him who committed the Murther, they then by the discovery drew two Signal Advantages: the one, that after they had caus'd an innocent man to be slain, they then caus'd also the guilty to die, this being a great pleasure to the enemy of mankind, whose destruction he delights in, and if he were permitted, he would unpeople the whole earth. The other, that  
hereby



hereby they gave some Credit and Authority to Dreams of this nature, which passing for Extraordinary and Divine, did further confirm some men in the respect they bare those Deities, to which they were attributed.

2. It may also be attributed to good ones, for as much as, although God hath left the Heathen Nations in a great measure to walk in their own ways, yet notwithstanding, he has not cast off all care of them in respect of his Universal Providence, of which the Angels are his Instruments, and the Executors of his Will and Pleasure. And although for good reasons he might suffer the poor *Arcadian* to be slain, it was yet an effect of his Providence to punish the Murtherer: for this is one great means, by which he preserves Humane Societies, for the subsistence whereof God always takes a particular care. As for the Second, I should without any great difficulty attribute it to a good Angel,

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34 *A Discourse concerning*

who would thus testifie, that though they be invifible, yet they do not only converse here below with men, but alfo that they have a kindnefs for great Perfons, who are lovers of Learning and Vertue; for to impute this Dream to meer chance, I think it can no more reasonably be done, then to thofe natural caufes, of which I fpoke before. The Author of *Peirefc* his life, has indeed reason to fay, that confidering all the parts of that Story feparately, there is not any one fingly that feems to be very wonderful. The City of *Nifmes*, faith he, might come into the Imagination of this great man, as he fleep, feeing he had a Design to go thither, and was almoft arriv'd at it: he might alfo dream of *Julius Cafar's* Medal, being very curious of thofe Antiquities; Although the Medals of that kind were very rare, yet it was no ftrange thing to meet with one there, feeing that *Nifmes* was a City which had been very much frequented

quented by the *Romans*. It was more probable to find one in the hands of a Goldsmith, then elsewhere, for they into whose hands such pieces of Antiquity do sometimes come, do often desire rather Currant Money, and find better opportunities of putting them off at Goldsmiths, then elsewhere. It might easily come to pass, both that *Peirefc* should dream that he bought it for so reasonable a price, and that a Goldsmith should be content with four Crowns for a piece, which those that are curious would without any difficulty buy at a far greater rate. But that so many circumstances should meet together in one and the same Dream, and that they should all exactly answer the particularities of the event, is that which far surpasses both the accidental hits of meer chance, and all natural causes, so that we must necessarily attribute it to some intelligent cause.

And every one may see that this



36 *A Discourse concerning*

is no ways above the power of Angels ; they then certainly knowing that at *Nismes*, in the hands of a Goldsmith, there was a *Julius Caesar*, which they had seen and heard valued at four Crowns, they might hereupon go and make this impression in the Imagination of this great Person. However I do not see in this Dream any the least Character, which doth necessarily oblige us to refer it to evil Angels: no more then (briefly to mention it) that of *Calpurnia*, the wife of *Caesar*, who the night immediately before the death of her husband, dream'd that she saw one run him through with a Sword in the Senate: though the relation which she made, and the prayers by which she endeavour'd to divert him from the Senate that day, prov'd all ineffectual: but good Angels may give us good advertisements, though we do not follow their advice, and this is a testimony of the care they have for the conservation of the life of Princes; as  
the



the neglect thereof is a proof of the imprudence of those who are concern'd therein. It is not related to us in Scripture, what was the dream of *Pilate's* wife, when she sent to pray him not to have any thing to do in the death of our Lord Christ: however it was, it seems to have come from the impression of a good Angel, though *Pilate* did not submit thereunto: However it was sufficient for the Angel in this case, to have caus'd his wife thus to give testimony to the Innocence of our Saviour; However, I say, it was (for I would not make it an Article of Faith) and every one here may use the liberty of his own judgment; perhaps this was done to distinguish betwixt those Dreams which Angels cause in our Imaginations by the express Command of God, and those which proceed from their operation by bare permission: those ought to be more powerful and efficacious, for as much as they are intended for the execution of

some Design, which God hath purposed with himself, and therefore 'tis necessary that he so far dispose the understanding of those, whom these visions concern, that they defer so much to them, as is necessary to bring about the Design; but these coming only from the good Inclinations of Angels, which God suffers them to follow and to discover on such and such occasions, it is of no great importance, though they do not produce the effect, which their Authors design'd; and it is sufficient satisfaction to them, that they have shown that good will, which they have for men, and especially for those who are eminent in vertue or dignity.

## CHAP. III.

*Of Divine Dreams.*

AS for Divine Dreams, they are also of two sorts, the one contains future things under Ænigmatical and Mysterious Representations, the other are much more plain and naked; there are very remarkable Examples of the first sort in the History of *Joseph*, as well in those, which concern'd himself, to foretel his own grandeur, as in those of *Pharaoh*, to forewarn him of the seven years of plenty, and seven others of dearth.

The Image of *Nabuchodonosor* is yet more remarkable, as the stone cut without hands, which from small beginnings came to be a great mountain and fill'd all the World; There are Examples of the other kind in the History of the birth of our Saviour; as well those which



40 *A Discourse concerning*

were sent to the wise men, to warn them to return some other way, then where *Herod* did expect them, as in those by which *Joseph* was commanded to carry *Christ* into *Egypt*, and to bring him back again in due time. As for *Jacob's* vision which was convey'd to him in a Dream, when he went into *Padan-Aram*, it was compounded of both the sorts, for the Ladder upon which the Angels did ascend and descend, had without doubt a mysterious signification, which related to *Christ*, but the words which he heard, contain'd the promises, plain and intelligible, which were not wrap'd up in the vail of dark and mysterious representations. Now concerning these and all other Divine Dreams in general, we may make these three Enquiries:

1. *Why God hath sometimes reveal'd himself in Dreams to his Servants?*

2. *How*

2. *How they could certainly know, that those Dreams had God for their Author, and that they were not vain delusions?*

3. *Whether this way of Revelation by Dreams, be yet practis'd, and whether God doth still make use of it under the Dispensation of the Gospel.*

As for the first of these questions, the Apostle tells us, *That God at divers times, and in sundry manners spoke of old to the fathers by the Prophets, but hath now in these last days spoke unto us by his Son*; where he opposes the dispensation of the Son to the former of Law, in three things,

1. *That God formerly spoke to the Fathers by the Prophets, but hath now spoke to us by his Son.*

2. *This he did at divers times, that is, he reveal'd the knowledge of himself by degrees, and as it were by parcels, adding one light to*

42 *A Discourse concerning*

to another successively, whereas he has now reveal'd to us all at once so much of his truth, as he design'd us to know even to the end of the world.

3. He now only reveals himself in one way, *viz.* By the preaching of the Gospel, whereas then he did it in divers manners.

And these divers manners may refer to those several kinds of faculties, which, as I said before, we make use of for the getting and preserving of knowledge, *viz.* The *External Senses*, the *Internal*, and the *Understanding*.

As for the External, God makes little use of three of them for this end, *viz.* Touching, Smelling and Tasting, but doth frequently employ the other two: for he hath been presented visibly to our eyes, as well in humane appearance, as to *Abraham* and *Manoe* and to some others, as in other shapes, as to *Moses* in the burning Bush: And as for hearing, he hath often caus'd voices  
to



to be heard from heaven, as by *Abraham*, and also by *Moses*, in the Bush, and in many other instances. As for the Internal Senses, he employs them both waking and sleeping.

1. Waking, by Extasies which he hath sometimes sent to his Servants: for then he acted in such manner upon their Imagination by that Power and Vertue which he there display'd, and made so great and so powerful an abstraction of their souls from their External Senses, that their functions did altogether cease, though they were not then asleep: and yet in the meantime he Imprinted in their phantasie the Images of Extraordinary and Admirable things, and made them inwardly to understand the voice, which gave them, either some Instruction or Command:

We see a famous Example hereof in *S. Peter*, when he saw the sheet descending from heaven, and heard the voice, *Kill and eat*, for he was then

44 *A Discourse concerning*

then in an Extasie or Trance, and the things which *S. John* relates to us in his *Revelation*, were thus convey'd to him.

2. In sleep, by dreams, such as I have already mention'd, and others of the like nature; and there is little difference betwixt Extasies and Dreams, only that, though in both there was a Cessation of the Functions of the bodily senses, yet in an Extasie, it was not altogether so entire and absolute, as in sleep, nor did it proceed from the same cause; for in sleep this cessation proceeded from natural causes, from whence it usually comes; but in an Extasie, it was caus'd by the extraordinary and miraculous power of the Spirit of God, which drew away the Souls of his Servants from the Organs of their External Senses, and hinder'd it from displaying its power and efficacy.

As to the understanding, the Spirit of God in this case acted in these two ways upon it.

1. That

1. That, whereas ordinarily the knowledge which we have in the understanding, enters by the Ministry of the senses, which conveys the Images of sensible things, and by these sensible objects furnishes us with the occasions of ratiocination; yet here God did immediately imprint in the spirit of his Prophets the understanding of those things, which he would reveal to them, thus making them to understand without the help of ratiocination: and he reveal'd many things thus to *Moses* and others.

2. That whereas we are not ordinarily induc'd to great actions, but after an attentive consultation upon the end, which we propound to our selves, upon the motives that induce us, and upon the means by which we may attain them, God did sometimes inspire his servants with miraculous and heroick motions, by which they were carried to extraordinary things without such a deliberation, only, because they were in-



46 *A Discourse concerning*

inwardly sensible to themselves, that it was God that thus excited them. such was that of *Ehud* when he kill'd *Eglon*, King of *Moab*; such was that of *Phineas* when he slew the *Israelite* and the *Madianite* at one blow; such that of *David* when he resolv'd to fight *Goliath* with a sling; and if there were any other ways, which God sometimes made use of to reveal himself by, under the legal dispensation, as the voice that was heard in the Tabernacle, and the lights of *Urim* and *Thummim*, they may be referr'd some way to that which I now come briefly to speak unto, and my design doth not oblige me to enlarge my discourse further upon this matter.

I shall only shew in general, why God made use of all these divers ways, and particularly, why this of dreams. For the first, we must know, that the Church, as *S. Paul* tells us, was then in its infancy, and there is a great deal of difference betwixt the way whereby we instruct

instruct Infants, and that by which we teach Arts and Sciences, to those who are of riper years; To these we only make use of words, or if there be occasion, to make Demonstrations to the eye, we only make them in lines and Mathematical Figures, or at the most content ourselves to propose to view the objects and the experiments of sensible things, as those of the *Vacuum* or the *Loadstone*; and all this doth only give occasion to the understanding, to form its own reasonings; but as for Infants, for as much as their faculty of reason is yet weak and imperfect, we make use of Medals, Emblems, Representations, Hieroglyphicks and other such like Artifices, so that we have of late years seen painted Chards, full of Emblematical Figures, whereby to imprint the Rules of Logick in the minds of the younger sort by play, and the reason hereof is, that besides that men have no need of those helps to make them understand these Sciences,



48 *A Discourse concerning*

Sciences, the Maxims and Theorems whereof they easily conceive at their first proposal, they also have no need of those allurements to invite them to learn, for as much as the beauty of the things themselves is a sufficient invitation hereunto: whereas children have both need to be taught for Example, by the Figure of an Ox, what is meant by a *Real or Substantial Being*, as we see in some Philosophical tables, as also they must be entic'd by these pretty devices, for the difficulty of the things would discourage them, if we went about otherwise to instruct them.

The Jewish Church being then in this condition of Infancy, these divers ways, which God made use of to instruct it by, have contributed something to the easier understanding of that which he design'd it should know, and had more power to prevail upon their minds, by affording matter of admiration by rare and miraculous events, then  
if



if the things had been deliver'd more plain and naked.

I say expressly, that which God design'd they should know, because sometimes the same things have been made use of for different purposes; For the Institution of Types, Symbolical Representations of things to come and those Admirable Prophe-tical visions have been often made use of, as a veil to cover and hinder the understanding of those things which ought not otherwise to be interpreted, then by the events.

2. For the Second, since it pleased God to make use of all these means to reveal himself to the Prophets, and by them to others also, there is no reason why he should have excluded that of dreams: and indeed there is yet this further reason in particular for them above others, that although there is a great deal of vanity in ordinary dreams, and that those which proceed from Angels have very often much of uncertainty and ambigui-  
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50 *A Discourse concerning*

ty, and that some Philosophers, as *Aristotle* among others, did suppose that there ought to be no regard had to that way of Divination, yet it hath always been almost the universal opinion of all Nations, that the Divinity did principally Communicate it self to Men by Dreams. *Homer* hath attributed some to his *Jupiter*: The *Stoicks* held that there were some altogether Divine: *Plato* said the same in some respects, and generally in the Eastern Nations, this opinion had a very great reputation: So that it was principally in those Nations that they have reduc'd the interpretation of dreams into an Art, and have laid down Rules concerning it; and now because the people of *Israel* were also of the same opinion, God therefore chose to send them such dreams, as were truly Divine; thus firmly to fix them to these, and to divert them from that vanity, to which other Nations suffer'd themselves to be carried by those others; and further



ther 'tis true, that the most natural way of conveying the knowledge of any thing whatever, even of the Deity it self, to men, is either by the presentation of some visible things, which furnish them with the means, and occasions of reasoning, and thus to rise from the consideration of the effect to the understanding the nature of the Cause, as is done in the dispensation of nature; or by way of speech, and to make known truths to them by vocal instruction, as under the dispensation of the Gospel; thus *S. Paul* joyns these two dispensations together, when he says, *that since in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save those that believe*: But to be thus instructed, there is need of more clearness and strength of understanding then we ordinarily have in our Infancy, so that the Church being then in that estate, it ought to be instructed some other way: Now among all the ways and methods



52 *A Discourse concerning*

made use of for this purpose, there was none more proper nor futable, then that of dreams; for as *Plato* saith, when a man, whose stomach is full of wine and victuals, comes to sleep, 'tis certain that such an one is very unfit to receive the communication of the Deity, and the visions fram'd in such an ones fancy would be very obscure, confus'd and turbulent.

But when an honest man, one who is sober and temperate, when such an one dreams, and that after a perfect concoction of his meat, there now rises no more vapours to his head, but is in a profound sleep, his humours calm and sedate, his imagination still and clear, as the smooth surface of a mirrour or looking-glass, being then sequestred from all the things of this present life and the commerce of sense, he is thus a very proper subject to receive the impression of Divine things, therefore God himself declaring the way by which he would reveal himself

self amongst the Prophets, which he rais'd to his people *Israel*, he said, that he would do it by visions and dreams.

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## C H A P. IV.

*The Characters by which they might know that those Dreams were truly Divine, and not vain Delusions.*

**B**Efore I come to decide the second question, I must briefly premise this, that when I did distinguish dreams into three kinds, and plac'd those that proceed from the operation of Angels in the second, and Divine Dreams in the third rank, I understood the distinction thus; among those that proceed from the operation of Angels, there may also be found Divine ones, in as much as God doth not only permit, but also may command the impression of them: but those, I call Angelical Dreams, are meerly



54 *A Discourse concerning*

such as those, which I have given Examples of, in as much as neither the formation of the images of which they consist, doth exceed their power, nor is the knowledge of the thing, which these Images represent, above their natural intelligence, nor above the quickness of their conjectures and divination; for their Spiritual Nature, their long experience of things, the knowledge they have of the secrets of nature and of the inclinations of men, with divers other assistances, which we have not, do enable them to reach much further, then we can, into the knowledge of future things.

Among those I call'd Divine Dreams, there are also some which consist of certain Images, the formation whereof is not above the power of Angels; and yet I call them Divine, because that, whether it was God that employ'd these Angels to convey them, or whether they were immediately caus'd by him-



himself, nevertheless the things signify'd by them did so far exceed the natural ability of an Angels understanding, that it was absolutely impossible they should ever attain to the knowledge of them, but by a particular Revelation; for though their knowledge, if compar'd with ours, be much greater, and their fore-sight of things reaches much further, yet it is limited, and that so, that they neither see things to come either long before, or with any great certainty.

Those then may be reputed to come from God, which by what messenger soever they be convey'd, yet contain such things, as God only is able to know and to reveal.

To return then to my purpose, we may boldly affirm, both *that those dreams had some marks by which they might be known to be Divine, and also, that it was necessary, that they should have so; although we do not now certainly know, wherein those marks did consist.*

56 *A Discourse concerning*

First, that they had such, for all those other ways, by which God is reveal'd to men, of which we have spoken before, have been distinguished, each by it's particular mark and character, by which it might be discern'd from all other things, where the resemblance or similitude they bare to each other, might cause any doubt, whether these might come from God or no. The voice which *Abraham* heard had something in it, whereby to distinguish it from other voices, which might be made by the ministry of evil Angels, and especially that where God commanded him to sacrifice his Son; This command being so contrary to his natural affections, and having the appearance of a barbarous and unparallel'd cruelty, How should this holy man be perswaded to execute it, if he had not had some mark, to know God to be the Author of it; and that so certain, that it could not be imputed to any other cause. *Moses* his vision

vision in the bush, to perswade him to undertake the deliverance of *Israel* out of *Egypt*, and his Introduction of it into the Land of *Canaan*, ought likewise to have some such signal character upon it; for how could he resolve upon so great an enterprize, accompanied with so great difficulties, if he had not been well perswaded, that it was God, who promis'd that he should overcome them all? *S. Peter's* vision could not be less remarkable, which prevail'd with him, to begin the preaching of the Gospel among the Gentiles, being a thing which the Jews had a great aversion against. The impression of those things in the understandings of *Moses*, of *David*, and *Solomon*, and divers others, ought also to have some signs, by which they might be acknowledged for Divine truths, otherwise these great Persons would never have related them with so great confidence to others, and as to themselves, could never have received



58 *A Discourse concerning*

ceiv'd so great satisfaction therein. Lastly, Those Heroick transportations of *Ehud* and *Phineas* to those actions related in Scripture, ought to be very distinct, clear and evident, otherwise they would not have suffer'd themselves to be carry'd to those actions, which had been truly punishable, and even in some sort horrible both before God man, if they had not proceeded from a Divine command. Dreams then without doubt have likewise had their certain marks, whereby to distinguish them from the Nocturnal illusions that proceed either from the impression of evil Angels, or from natural causes, as I intimated before.

2. And it is also necessary that they should have such marks, for the same reasons which I alledged before upon former occasions; For when God commanded *Joseph* in a dream to carry *Jesus* into *Egypt*; Such thoughts as these might have come into his mind. *This dream perhaps*

perhaps may be only a vain imagination, and a meer phantasm of my own brain, which hath no foundation of truth in it: Perhaps the great solicitude I am always in for the preservation of this miraculous Infant, hath sent into my soul this Idea or opinion, that they now seek his life, though perhaps they never so much as think of any such thing: Perhaps it is some evil spirit which either takes pleasure to give me needless fears, or would incite me to remove this Infant from hence, that so upon the way he might more easily lay and execute his treacherous designs; in a word, divers such like things might come into his thoughts, and cause a great uncertainty of resolution, what he had best to do upon the command. And nevertheless it appears by the history, that he did not at all hesitate upon it, which shews that he had a powerful perswasion of the truth of the dream. Now though we cannot at present certainly know, wherein this full perswasion did consist, and upon what it did depend, yet notwithstanding-



60 *A Discourse concerning*

withstanding we ought not at all to question, but that this and the like persuasions were founded on something that was both in it self sufficient, and to them a sufficiently evident ground of their assent.

But we must enquire what that was, and this is the proper subject of this Meditation; since there are but three sorts of dreams, those which are produc'd by natural causes, those which proceed from the operation of Angels, and those, which I call Divine. The readiest way to come to the knowledge of the truth in this case, will be to shew that these can neither belong to the first nor the second rank, and thence it will necessarily follow, that they must belong to the third. As for natural dreams, I suppose, that 'tis easie to distinguish those from such as proceed from a Divine impression: these natural dreams, I said, were of four sorts; the first depends upon the temperament and constitution of the body, others ac-  
know-



knowledge no other cause, then the meer motion of the *Idea's* of the brain by the natural heat in the time of sleep ; the others come from a very attentive application of our minds to some things when we were awake ; and the last from the passions of the sensitive soul, which is, as it were, awaken'd and acts more vigorously during the repose of our senses. But now, for Example, to which of these causes can we refer the dreams of *Joseph* or *Pharaoh*? What mark do they bear of the temperament of their bodies, or the constitution of their humors? What *Idea's* of things could remain in their memory, which could be able so regularly to proportion these dreams, as to see in the one, the number of the sheaves, and of the Stars, the Sun and the Moon, and their prostrations before him ; in the other, the number of the Ears of Corn, both the empty and the full ones, of the Kine, the fat and the lean ones, and their action in devouring

62 *A Discourse concerning*

vouring one another? What so great attention of mind could be upon any worldly care or employment as to cause any such representations in their sleep? What passion could move either their concupiscible or their irascible appetite, as thereby to form such phantasms? And further, the dreams that come from any of these causes are always irregular and composed of parts not consistent with one another, so that nothing is commonly more phantastick and extravagant then they: but those of *Joseph* and *Pharaoh* and the Image of *Nabuchodonosor*, and if there be any other of the same nature mentioned in Scripture, they are so admirably well composed, that they seem to be the result of a very intelligent Cause. The dreams which proceed from natural causes are obscure and always presented to our minds with a great deal of confusion, so that we observe nothing distinct in them, or if one part have something of clearness and perspicuity in

in it, the others are commonly perplex'd and intricate. Whereas those dreams related in Scripture, are not only clear, but full of light, whether we consider them in the whole, or in their parts; natural dreams do make so little impression upon our Spirits, that for the most part, we do not remember them when we are awake; whereas the Divine are firmly fix'd in our memory: for as for what is reported of *Nabuchodonosor*, that he had forgot his dream, and that he stood in need of *Daniel*, to recal it again into his mind, this happen'd by the particular dispensation of the Divine Power and Providence which remov'd out of his mind the *Idea's* of his vision, thereby to render the wisdom of *Daniel* more remarkable: besides this Prince very well remembered that he had dream'd, and the perplexity which his dream caus'd in him, the passionate desire he had to recal it, the manner of his behaviour to the Sooth-sayers and all the



64 *A Discourse concerning*

the rest which pass'd upon this occasion, fully shew'd that this vision did very nearly concern him, and that also in his dream he had observ'd something that was singular and extraordinary in it: if in the morning we remember our natural dreams, yet we disregard them and count them but meer trifles; whereas those to whom God sent those Divine Dreams, did not only distinctly remember them, but had them still firmly represented to them when they were awake, and did look upon them as Divine advertisements, and were very solicitous about the interpretation, or the event of them. When dreams proceeding from natural causes have made any impression upon our Spirits, so that they hold us in some suspense in the morning, as it sometimes happens, we commonly do these two things: First, We make an attentive reflexion thereupon, and carefully examine and consider them in all their circumstances, and

at last find them to be meer vanities, and produc'd by some of those natural causes before mention'd, and so we free our selves from that disquietness they had before caus'd in us. Secondly, If we cannot thus wholly free our selves, then we compare them with those true and real operations, which our senses produce in us waking, and by thus comparing them, all those impressions which these dreams had made upon our spirits, do altogether vanish. For it is here almost as in the comparison of things represented upon a Theatre, with those that are really done. Whilst we see a Tragedy acted, we feel a concernment and passion in us, sometimes even to the effusion of tears. But this only touches, as it were, the surface of the soul, and is not of any long continuance, or if this emotion of the mind do continue longer, yet it is as good as nothing in respect of that which the real view of these actions and passions,

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66 *A Discourse concerning*

and murders actually committed in our sight, do cause in us; but in Divine Dreams it was directly contrary, for if those, to whom they were sent, did in the least doubt of their Divinity, and did set themselves seriously to examine them, the more they consider'd them, the less reason they found to doubt of them; and when they compar'd them with the operation of their senses, they found, to their great astonishment and admiration, that even those of sense were less true and real, than they; these Divine Dreams, I say, made a more strong and firm impression upon the Spirits of those that receiv'd them, and they were more fully perswaded of their Divinity, than we are of the reality of the operation of our senses, when waking they exercise themselves upon their respective objects, and it is no difficult thing to give a reason for it. That which causes sensation, and makes us believe the truth and reality of the actions



actions of sense, is, that those sensible species, which affect the outward senses do also pass into the Common-sense, which is a faculty superior to them, so that it can judge of their actions and of the things imprinted thereupon. It can also compare the action of one sense with the operation of another, and laying them together confer their respective properties and qualities; and the judgment that results from hence, depends as well upon the impression, which the object makes upon the external organ, according as it is more or less intense, as upon the nature of the Internal and Common-sense, which is a corporeal faculty, and that which belongs to the sensitive part of the soul, of which Dogs and Horses and other animals do also partake. As for Divine Dreams, the impression was indeed made in the fancy, which is also a corporeal faculty, it being one of the internal senses; but the reflexion which the servants

68 *A Discourse concerning*

of God made thereupon, when waking, was the work of the understanding, which is more clear and exact in its operations, and *which in the Prophets and those other faithful men, to whom these dreams were convey'd, was further enlightned by the Spirit of God, to judge aright of the object which it had so attentively consider'd.* The impression then of these dreams being more profoundly imprinted upon the phansy, for as much as it came from a supernatural cause, then that which the sensible objects make upon our outward senses; and the faculty, which did consider and reflect upon them (both as to the whole and the parts and the circumstances that attended them) being more excellent and more exact in its judgments then tis possible for the common sense to be, consequently the result thereof ought to be proportionably more perfect, and the perswasion of the divinity of these dreams more certain and more undoubted.

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As for the dreams which proceed from the operation of Angels, it must be acknowledged they are more difficultly distinguish'd from those that are Divine: for they are capable of a more regular formation, then those that are produc'd by natural causes; they may be more strongly imprinted upon the imagination, and so may be of longer continuance, so that we may more easily remember them, when we do awake; in a word, they are of greater force to perswade us, that they proceed from a Divine principle. For the understanding of an Angel doth manifestly shew it self, as well in the methodical placing of the parts of the dream, from whence it draws its symmetry and proportion, as in the resemblance which they bear to the things, which they are designed to represent; as we have seen before in the dream of the Egg and the Treasure, to which we might add many others of the like sort; Yet here we must call to mind



70 *A Discourse concerning*

what was before said of this matter, that there is a great deal of difference betwixt the dreams which may have been caus'd by Angels only, for as much as that which they contain'd and whereof they did consist, was not above either, the understanding or the activity of Angels; and betwixt those of which they were only the Instruments to form the Images in the phansy of Gods servants, according to the Command, and according to the Revelation which he had given them, of his Will: As for the first, the comparing the actions of good and bad Angels would easily show the difference, and it might more especially be made in this double respect: (1.) The Images that good Angels did imprint upon the phansy, did never contain any thing of Idolatry or Pagan superstition, whereas those, which proceeded from evil ones, were commonly full of it: for in these there was always either some representation of false gods,  
or

or something which concern'd their worship, or some other vision of that nature, which denoted the author of the dream to be willing to authorize Idolatry or Superstition, from which the Inclination of good Angels was always very distant.

(2.) The dreams caus'd by evil Angels did always, or at least for the most part induce to some evil actions, which the good ones never do, who as they are free from temptation to evil themselves, so do they never tempt others to it. That which might render the discerning betwixt these two more doubtful or more difficult, is, that upon this, as upon other occasions, these Angels of darkness might transform themselves into Angels of light, and endeavour to impose upon the credulity of the faithful, by causing them to have such dreams which should not seem to contain any thing of that vice, we before mention'd, and which should tend to

72 *A Discourse concerning*

actions indifferent in themselves, or such as perhaps might have the appearance of good, but yet such as they might make use of for some evil design. And the dream sent to *Joseph*, to command him to carry Christ into *Egypt* may serve for an Example; for, as I have already said, *Joseph* might perhaps think that this was a meer illusion of the devil, who design'd hereby to lie in wait for him to destroy him.

Here we may lay down these several considerations. First, That how great a cheat soever the Devil is, yet he can never counterfeit so well, but something will happen whereby he may be discovered: they say, that when he visibly appears in humane shape, what ever care he takes to disguise himself, yet there is always something in the apparition, by which he may be known, either by the horror of his Claws, or some stinking smell or some such like thing which presently appears  
and



and renders the vision terrible and frightful.

Whether it be so, or no, I know not, I will not affirm it, though it be not without some appearance of reason. But as for what concerns his actions and the means he makes use of, whereby to deceive men, whether by dreams or by voice, or any other illusion, neither is his own malice able, nor will the Divine Providence suffer him so perfectly to resemble the actions of good Angels, but there will be some mark by which to discern them. And what I said before upon occasion of the dream of the *Arcadian*, is founded only upon the relation that *Cicero* makes of it.

If we had had a perfect and entire account thereof, with all its circumstances, one might certainly have found something in it, whereby we might easily have known, whether it proceeded from a good or bad Angel. Hence I dare boldly affirm, that if the dream sent to *Joseph*

74 *A Discourse concerning*

*seph* had come from an evil spirit, there would have been something more in it, then what is related of it, whereby this holy man would easily have known, that it was not of a Divine Inspiration.

Secondly, Not only dreams proceeding from the Devil have some character, from whence we may conclude their original, but also those that come from good Angels have something on the contrary, whence we may conclude their Author truly good, for naturally every effect retains some mark of its cause; Fire leaves something of it self, where it exercises its power; and Water, where it passes; Beasts do imprint something upon their proper operations; and Men and other intelligent agents, on theirs, and generally all manner of productions bear some indications of the nature of their cause. And the more excellent the causes are, the more knowable they are in their effects, unless on set purpose they corrupt their

their action and designedly disguise it, as when *David* counterfeited the fool, which yet Angels never do. From whence I conclude, that since it was a good Angel, which by the command of God, convey'd this dream to *Joseph* (for the Scripture doth openly attest it) it was without doubt accompanied with very evident arguments of the nature of its cause.

First it is absolutely said, that an *Angel of the Lord* appeared to *Joseph* in a dream, and afterwards that he spake to him, saying, *Rise and take the little Infant and his Mother, and fly into Egypt and stay there, until I bring thee word, for Herod seeks the Infant, to put him to death.*

Where we have the Apparition, after that the Command, lastly, the Reason which he there alledges; as for the Apparition, that could not be, but in some Image, which must appear visible, which might symbolically represent the Angelical Nature, for that being spiritual and  
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76 *A Discourse concerning*

immaterial, it could not otherwise be represented to this holy man: For who can doubt but that Image had something so splendid and glorious, that *Joseph* seeing it in his sleep, and after remembering it, when awake, was in both equally struck with admiration of its Magnificence? and what essay made by an Angel of darkness to imitate the splendour of such a vision, could come near the glory of the appearance of a Divine Messenger, who brought the Commands of God to men and for that purpose was adorn'd with a ray of the Divine Majesty?

As for the Command, that could not be given but by the mediation of a voice, which *Joseph* in his sleep imagin'd to hear, as he apprehended he saw the Angel encompass'd with light. I do not here say, that mens voices! have such different marks of distinction one from another, as that blind men, as Historians do testify, have distinguish'd them in a multitude, by the meer characters of  
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their voices, although they have but once heard them speak; Since perhaps it might be reply'd that blind men having often heard other men speak, are thus better enabled to make the distinction; whereas 'tis possible that *Joseph* never heard the voice of any, either good or bad Angels before, and upon this account could not compare them together: to which may be added; that the natural voice of men is of one kind, and that which Angels form only by representation in the imagination of a man asleep, of another. I shall here only return, that as the Image or apparition of the Angel had something particular in its lustre and Majesty, so the voice had something in the tone, and in the nature of its articulation extraordinarily Majestick. So that as the Devil could never be able to frame an apparition of himself which might come in competition with the Magnificence of that vision, so neither could he counterfeit a voice, which might



78 *A Discourse concerning*

might equal the Majesty and Authority of that of a good Angel.

Lastly, the Reason of the command is very remarkable, for it would have been very strange, if the Devil should have been careful for the preservation of the life of an Infant, from whose birth, if we do consider the miracles that did accompany it, he could expect nothing, but the ruine of his Empire: he is a murtherer from the beginning, and if it were in his power, would destroy all the Infants that come into the world from the very Cradle, but that he foresees some, who come for the ruine of mankind, as *Nero's* and *Caligula's*. And since if this Infant was in any danger, it was certainly under the dominion of *Herod*, who of his own nature was cruel, who had more reason of fear from the birth of Christ, then any other Potentate whatever, and who had an absolute power in those Countries, if the Devil had had a design  
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to impose upon *Joseph* by his delusions, would he ever have induc'd him to have left the place, where he was, to have gone to another? Where could he have laid his designs against Christ with greater hopes of success then where he was, being, as it were, in the Paws of a Lion, or in the den of a wild beast?

Thirdly, It plainly appears that *Joseph* was fully perswaded of the Divinity of the vision, seeing that without any deliberation, as soon as he awoke, he arose and took the Infant and fled into *Egypt*; now the dreams which come from natural causes, do not carry us to any action, and we think we should be taken for fools, if we undertook any thing, though of never so little importance upon the meer solicitation of a dream. And those very dreams which yet have something more of life and vigour in them, then natural ones have, and upon this account may be attributed to some Spirit,

80 *A Discourse concerning*

Spirit; these indeed may cause a great deal of disquiet, of hope or apprehension, but they do not induce us to undertake any resolution in things of Consequence, unless it be those of Melancholy tempers or unsound brains: Since then *Joseph*, who was a wise and sober man, betook himself so readily to the execution of the command, it is certain that he was fully perswaded of the Divinity of the Revelation: for since Jesus was his Son, we cannot think that he would have rashly taken up such a resolution; much less certainly would he have done it, the question being then of him, of whom he had the honour to be appointed Guardian.

Now this perswasion must necessarily come from one of these two things,

1. He either found in the object it self such irrefragable arguments of its truth, that there remain'd no place for deliberation, but his understanding immediately determin'd it self: Or,

Or, Secondly, if the Arguments were not altogether so strong and evident as to force his judgment to embrace the object, then God by the incomprehensible power of his Spirit did so effectually determine it on this side, that it could not possibly resist.

This latter is the less usual method of Gods proceedings ; but when it doth so come to pass, then it is an undoubted proof that the object is truly Divine. For it is only God, who doth so rule in the understanding of wise and vertuous men, and who so powerfully inclines it to such a belief and resolution, although it doth not see in the object reasons altogether proportionable to the effect it feels in the soul : So that if *Joseph* was thus perswaded to the execution of the command, he then had in his own private sentiments and in the extraordinary determination of his understanding, an evident proof of the Divinity of his dream.



82 *A Discourse concerning*

The first of these is without doubt the more common and natural: for what the Loadstone is to Iron, that is truth to the understanding, which doth greedily embrace it, and inseparably joyns it self to it, when once by evident demonstrations it clearly apprehends it: If then *Joseph* by this means was perswaded, then his understanding saw such marks of the truth and Divinity of the dream, that he did more certainly believe it, then he either did or could do those corporeal objects, which represented themselves to his sense.

As for those dreams whereof Angels may have been the instruments, but not the Authors, they were easie to be distinguish'd from all others: For besides, as I said before, that every effect draws something from the nature of the cause, and causes the more excellent they are, the greater impression they make upon their effects, whether God did mediately or immediately con-

convey those dreams; so far it was necessary they should bear some undoubted mark and character of his power : this only thing was enough to distinguish them from all others, that they contain'd in them things which pass'd the reach of the understanding both of Men and Angels ; for how could it enter into the understanding of either of them, that *Joseph* should come to that grandeur which his dreams promis'd ? What created intelligence could Divine, that there should be in *Egypt* seven years of plenty and abundance, and after them seven others of dearth and barrenness, as *Pharaoh* saw in his ? For grant that Angels have very much of the knowledge of natural causes, yet two such admirable events, so regular and constant, each for the space of seven years, how could they be searched into, being so closely and obscurely hid in the secret foldings of a particular providence ? What humane understanding, or what foresight of Angels



84 *A Discourse concerning*

could discover both the succession and the disagreement, the duration and the end of all those Empires, which were represented one after another in the image of *Nabuchodonosor*? What conjecture could divine that, which the stone cut without hands did presage, and what it was to do and to become, as the same vision of *Nabuchodonosor* doth represent it? And if it were necessary here to speak of *Jacob's* vision, none, I say, not only of men, but none of those Angels themselves, which he saw ascending and descending upon the ladder, were able to foretel (if God had not extraordinarily reveal'd it) that that did represent the *Messias* to come, who should make peace between heaven and earth, and re-establish a communication betwixt God and men by the intermission of Angels; and as for the promises, which God, who was at the top of the ladder in heaven, made to the Patriarch, they were plain and clear according to the truth of things, with-



without any shadow of Allegory or mysterious Symbol, but they were of things so far remote, that it was only God who could foresee or foretel the event, so that that vision was altogether Divine.

This is well indeed, will some here object, these dreams appear to be Divine when they are understood, or when they are confirmed by the events; but let us here enquire, how they could be judged so, by those to whom they were sent, before the interpretation, and by the meer consideration of the dreams themselves. We must then distinguish betwixt the dreams themselves and their interpretations, (which were sometimes made by the servants of God, as *Joseph* and *Daniel*) and their events. And to begin with the consideration of their events, it is certain that when they were once come to pass, they did then fully evidence the Divinity of those visions, that did represent

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86 *A Discourse concerning*

them ; For not to speak of the Image of *Nabuchodonosor*, which did prefigure things at such a distance, that all the Angels together were never able to foretel them ; I shall only speak of those of *Joseph* and *Pharaoh*, and the Officers of his house, who were in prison with *Joseph* ; who, having seen the things so punctually accomplish'd, could in the least doubt, but that they were of Divine Revelation ? But this is not that which we here principally intend.

2. As for their interpretations, it is certain that those admirable resemblances, that are betwixt them and the visions themselves, must needs be matter of great wonder to those, who heard them, even before the event : for these resemblances could not come by meer chance : since there did appear in every particular so exact a relation between them, and we see that *Nabuchodonosor* was ravish'd with admiration of them, and *Pharaoh* was so fully persuaded,

swaded, that without any further consultation he preferr'd *Joseph* to the highest dignity, with an absolute power to dispose of the affairs, particularly of the revenues, of *Egypt*, according to his own pleasure, to provide himself by the provision of the plenty of the seven first years, against the desolation which should be caus'd by the seven years dearth: but 'tis true, that this also doth not reach to a full and proper answer to the objection: since the divinity of the dreams ought to appear in themselves.

Thirdly, Here then we ought to observe the difference betwixt those dreams which brought with them matter of exprefs commands, as those which were sent to *Joseph* and to the wise men, which came to worship our Saviour, and those which consisted simply in Symbolical and Allegorical representations of things to come. Those of the first sort ought to contain in them evident and undoubted characters of their



88 *A Discourse concerning*

Divinity, otherwise they could never have powerfully enough perswaded the servants of God to obey them: those of the latter did not absolutely require so great a force and evidence, and yet 'tis certain, that these have been able to make such a powerful impressi<sup>o</sup>n upon the minds of those that receiv'd them, that they *certainly believ'd* them to proceed from a supernatural and Divine Cause. *Joseph* sufficiently testifies this by the earnestness he shows to relate his, for that was indeed to acknowledge that he had seen something that had made very sensible impressi<sup>o</sup>ns on him. The Officers of *Pharaohs* house did the same in theirs, and testify'd that they did not take them for rash and vain delusions: and *Pharaoh* did yet appear more lively and deeply mov'd by his, in regard of that pain and uneasiness he was in, till he had obtain'd the understanding and interpretation of it.

Not to repeat what I have already

ready said concerning the means by which the divinity of dreams sent from above might be discerned from the vanity of those that proceed from natural causes (though it be also necessary to remember all those characters which do distinguish them) I say, there was never any of that kind which did not cause a great astonishment in those that receiv'd them. I shall begin with the consideration of those which are less remarkable and by degrees proceed to those that are more famous. *Pharaoh's* Cup-bearer dream'd that he saw a vine, which had three branches, from whence sprang certain buds, which increas'd and blossom'd: that at the same time the bunches of grapes blossom'd and brought their fruit to maturity; That he had *Pharaoh's* Cup in his hand, and that he took the grapes and press'd and strain'd them into the Cup, and then gave it into *Pharaoh's* hand, now I pray, the dreams which proceed from our bodily

90 *A Discourse concerning*

dry temper and constitution, or from the motion of the *Idea's* in our memory caus'd by natural heat, or from the application of our minds to the cares and businesses of life, or from the motion of our passions, are they either so emblematical on the one side, or so regular on the other, as to present, in their very constitutions, Symbols consisting of so many parts, which answer one another with so great proportion? To which if you add that this emblem, as it was distinct and articulate, so was it also lively, clear, deeply impress'd upon the imagination, you will not find it any way strange if it pass'd in the apprehension of the Cup-bearer for a Divine and extraordinary dream: but he had yet more reason to be of that opinion, when his Companion, the Baker, told him in the morning that he had also dream'd the same night, that there were three white baskets upon his head, and that in the uppermost there was all manner of



of provisions relating to the Bakers trade for *Pharaoh*, and that the Birds did eat them out of the Basket, as it was upon his head: for this circumstance, that they both dream'd at the same time, and saw visions rare in their compositions, proportionable in their parts, Symbolical, without doubt, in their signification, suitable each to the Office of the dreamer; which agreed both in the number three, although they did otherwise differ in some remarkable circumstances; lastly, which had made very great impressions upon them both; all this, I say, could not be brought about but by an intelligent and heavenly cause; so that, 'tis no wonder if the perplexity which these visions caus'd in their minds did equally appear in the Morning by the change of their countenances: The dreams of *Pharaoh* had yet something of more exactness in the just proportion and symmetry of their parts; seven young kine on the one hand, and seven

92 *A Discourse concerning*

seven more on the other ; the good and strong constitution of the one seven , and the leanness of the other ; the beauty of the fat ones, and the gastly ugliness of the other ; the action of the one, which devoured and swallowed up the other, and all this without any mixture of any thing that was phantastical or extravagant, as it commonly happens in dreams, and without any circumstance from whence *Pharaoh* might infer that there was any thing in it, which might in the least argue any tincture, either of his cares or passions, either of the constitution of his humours or the temperament of his body, this was sufficient even at first to cause admiration and perplexity in his thoughts. And indeed, in that it is said, he wakened upon his dream, this shows that he was very sensibly touch'd with it, for those dreams that make any great impression upon us do awaken us. Nevertheless *Pharaoh* was not much frightened

ed at his first dream, and went again to sleep as before; but when another vision answerable to the first represented to him on the one hand seven fair and full ears of Corn, and on the other seven small ones, blasted with the East wind, and that the small and withered ones devoured the fair and full ones; then he did not at all doubt, but it was God that spake to him by these representations, so that his very soul was terrified. And indeed these two visions thus presented one upon the neck of another, were too clearly and visibly mysterious, not to cause something of astonishment. Those of *Joseph* appear to me yet more admirable.

He first saw the sheaves of his brethren which did encompass his sheaf and prostrate themselves before it; which had so clear and plain a signification, that his brethren understood it at the very first: a little after in another dream he saw the Sun and Moon and Eleven Stars, which also  
fell



94 *A Discourse concerning*

fell down before him ; which still contain'd the same thing in such an illustrious and glorious Emblem, that when he came to recite it, his father did not only understand it, but was offended at it and chid him for it: Whether then we suppose, that *Jacob* and his other children did really believe that *Joseph* had thus dream'd, or that they suspected that he had contriv'd it, yet it manifestly appears that they acknowledged, that that could not proceed but from the operation of an intelligent agent. For meer chance could never have adjusted the parts of these visions singly, much less could it so well have joyn'd them both together: This then was enough to make them believe these dreams were supernatural. But yet there was another thing that might perswade *Joseph*, that they were truly Divine, his conscience bare him witness that he was void of ambition, and if perhaps he had had some kind of inclina-

clination or tendency that way, yet however it would not have been to desire dominion over his brethren, much less would he have desired it over those who begat him, for this is a monstrous desire, and such as is altogether unnatural. But grant he had such strange elevations of Spirit as to desire to become so great, as that his father and mother should prostrate themselves before him, whence was it that his imagination set it self to find out the Sun and Moon and Eleven Stars precisely, whereby to presage this Empire? It is a very rare thing, if in a meer natural dream, any one imagines that he sees the Sun, for there is always something that is black and dark in these nocturnal visions: But though that should happen much oftner, yet to see it in such a state of humiliation, and the Moon and Eleven Stars to represent that, which this dream prefigured, is a thing so far above that which natural causes are accustomed to do, that



96 *A Discourse concerning*

that it would be too great an impertinence to impute it to them.

Lastly, the dreams of *Nabuchodonosor* are yet in my opinion somewhat more magnificent: for there a great Image was represented to the imagination of this Prince, the splendor whereof was excellent, and it's appearance terrible: the head thereof was of fine gold, the breast and arms of Silver, its belly and hinder parts of Brass, its legs of Iron, its feet partly of Iron, partly of Clay; after that appear'd to him a Stone, which of it self fell from a Mountain without being cut with hands, which rowling down struck against the feet of the image, and bruised them to pieces, afterwards the Iron, the Clay, the Brass, the Silver, the Gold were all equally bruis'd to pieces, and became like chaff in the air in Summer, blown up and down, and driven to and fro with a strong wind; so that all the materials, whereof the Image was composed, did vanish and wholly



wholly disappear. But as for the Stone that broke the Image, it became a great mountain, and fill'd all the universe: let us a little lay aside the interpretation of this vision, and not at all consider the things design'd thereby; let us only consider the vision in it self, and see if ever any thing, like unto it, did enter into a humane understanding: Certainly the *Idea* of such an Image, is so fair, the variety of the Metals and Materials, that compos'd it, so remarkable; the continued series of them so admirably succeeding each other; the stone which broke and dash'd it in pieces and the manner of its coming so extraordinary and surprising; its increase so miraculous, and in general the whole series of this representation so majestick, that it could never enter into the imagination of man, if it had not been sent from above: for certainly humane understanding was too little to serve for a mould, where so great and magni-

ficent a work should be framed. And the effect, which it produced in the Spirit of *Nabuchodonosor*, is very considerable: he was a Prince, and those of that birth and dignity are not easily mov'd by extraordinary things; He was a great Monarch and Conquerour, and such Princes have commonly more elevated thoughts, then others: and of Monarchs and Conquerours, he was one who was puffed up with the opinion of his own grandeur, and this would be apt to make him in all conditions either sleeping or waking, to think most things either Ordinary or Common; and further, when he awakened, he did not at all remember his vision. Now when our dreams are vanish'd from our minds, the motion and impression, which they then made upon us, do usually cease and vanish with them: and though there did not remain the least footstep of his dream in his memory, but only thus far, to remember that he had dreamed, yet  
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when he came to acquaint his Soothsayers, Astrologers and Magicians herewith, he told them, that his Spirit did remain astonish'd, and the passion which he had to retrieve what was fled from him, that so he might have the interpretation of it, caused him to denounce threatenings and terrible punishments to them, in case they did not acquaint him with it; so that it must necessarily be, that he was inwardly sensible of something of divinity in the dream, that produc'd in him such a passionate desire to know the interpretation.

I shall not here speak any thing of *Jacob's* vision, for that speaks enough of it self; for certainly the words he there heard did promise such great things, so far above either the power or knowledge of humane understanding, the voice of the speaker was so Majestick, the image of a Ladder which reach'd from earth to heaven, upon which the Angels did ascend and

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100 *A Discourse concerning*

descend, upon the top whereof God himself did seem to sit in a visible and humane shape and figure, as a presage of the future Incarnation of Christ; all this, I say, had so great, so glorious an aspect, and Jacob himself was so struck with Reverence, Admiration and Amazement, that he was forc'd to cry out that the very place was terrible, and that in seeing this vision, he was set, as it were, in the threshold of the house God, and in the very porch of heaven. And this shows that this dream had made an impression in him quite different from those which proceed from natural causes. I suppose I have already sufficiently discuss'd this question, it only now remains to resolve the last.

CHAP.

## CHAP. V.

*Whether God doth make use of this kind of Revelation by Dreams, now under the Dispensation of the Gospel.*

**J**oel hath thus prophesy'd concerning the time of the coming of the Messias, *It shall come to pass in those days, saith God, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. And in those days I will surely pour out of my spirit upon my servants, and upon my handmaids, so that they shall prophesy: And I will do wonders in heaven above and signs on earth beneath, blood and vapour of smoke; the Sun shall be turned into darkness and the Moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come. It is clear from these very words of the Prophet, without any need of produ-*

cing others, that at the coming of the Messias, God would pour out a great abundance of his Spirit upon his Church, which should render the extraordinary and miraculous gifts of prophesy, of visions and of dreams almost common to all the faithful, which God before did but sparingly communicate to some particular persons: and indeed, the Apostles have apply'd this passage to the sending of the holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and the experience of things at that time did very authentically testify the truth of this Prophecy; for the abundance and variety of gifts, which God poured upon Christians, at the first establishment of Christianity, is a thing much to be wondered at; in as much as he did not only inspire the Apostles, and Prophets & Evangelists, the Pastors, Doctors and Deacons, and generally all those who had any publick Office or charge in the Church, but also many particular persons without any difference of  
Age,



Age, Sex or Condition. And the History of the Acts of the Apostles, with that which we have yet remaining of the succeeding Age, doth give us a very sufficient testimony hereof.

But here are yet further two things very remarkable ; the first, that the fulfilling of this prophecy, if we regard the Emphasis of the terms, wherein it is express'd, is not limited to the Infancy of the Church or an hundred or sixscore years after, but extends to all the ages of Christianity, even to the end of the world. For here is an opposition of the times of the Gospel to the times of the Law, and by consequence of all the duration of the one dispensation, to all the duration of the other.

The second, that notwithstanding this, we see by experience that those miraculous gifts of the Spirit of God are ceased long ago, so that it is now many Ages since we saw the least footsteps of them in the

104 *A Discourse concerning*

Christian Church: for all that hath been either spoke or written these twelve hundred years concerning those miraculous gifts, is either very much suspected, or altogether false and supposititious, and full of vanity and imposture; how then shall we reconcile our experience with this Prophecy?

In Order to do it, and to clear the way for the solution of the present question, I think it convenient to lay down certain previous considerations.

First, It is certain, That which God promised by his Prophets, to give a great measure of his Spirit in the time of the Revelation of the Messias, must have its accomplishment from the first coming of Christ even unto his second; but in what manner it shall be done, is a thing that deserves a more attentive consideration: for though the words of *Joel* seem only to design the extra-

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traordinary and miraculous gifts of the Spirit, yet under them are also compris'd, those more ordinary ones, which consist in the illumination of the understanding of the faithful, in knowledge of the Divine truth, in consolation, in sanctification, in hope, in patience under temptations and afflictions, and in all Christian vertues; for it would have been a small thing for God to have promis'd abundance of those gifts, which are truly miraculous, but such as of themselves are not effectual for the procurement of Salvation, and have kept back those which only are necessary and sufficient thereunto: And indeed, we ought to understand that Prophecy of *Isaiah* in the same manner, *Your God shall come himself, and shall deliver you: then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped, then shall the lame leap, as the Hart, and the tongue*



106 *A Discourse concerning*

*tongue of the dumb shall sing in triumph, for the waters shall spring in the desert and torrents in solitary places.* It is very true, that those words have a proper and literal sense, which was accomplished at the coming of our Saviour, but they have also an Allegorical and Figurative one, which respects the saving graces of the Spirit, which have their accomplishment all along in all Ages of the Church.

Secondly, It is further certain, that the reason for which these miraculous gifts are expressly mention'd in this prophesy, and not the more ordinary and saving ones, is, because these promises are conceiv'd in terms more accommodated to the legal dispensation, for under that oecconomy, the faithful very well knew, that all the good, that was in them, did come from God, and accordingly

ly return'd him thanks ; *Moses* himself hath thus taught, and the *Psalms* of *David* are full of such acknowledgments, yet nevertheless they did not distinctly know, that it came from a particular operation of the third Person in the Deity: the Spirit of Faith, the Spirit of Consolation, the Spirit of Adoption, the Spirit of Sanctification being terms unknown to the Faithful of the Ancient Church ; So that until *David*, who began to speak something of the Spirit of God, in matters relating to Sanctification, no one before spake any thing of it, and after him these Expressions, were very rare. Whereas there is nothing more ordinary in the Books of the Old Testament, then to attribute the Visions and Revelations of the Prophets, their extraordinary and miraculous gifts, which did both enlighten and astonish the World, to the Spirit of God,

108 *A Discourse concerning*

God; in so much that the particular skill which was bestowed on *Bezaleel* and *Aholiab* to work in all manner of carved work for the building of the Tabernacle of the Congregation is particularly attributed to the Efficacy of the Spirit of God, in the Books of *Moses*: It is true, the ordinary gifts of the Spirit of God are much less resplendent and cause less of admiration, then the extraordinary: for those are so internal, that they do not show themselves, but in Actions of Piety, Charity and Sanctification, which are commonly very Moderate and Regular, and which unless we take a more close and exact view of them, do not seem to proceed from any other Principle, then that of right reason; Whereas the other do so dazle the eyes of all beholders with their lustre, that no one who sees their effects, can judge them to proceed from any thing less then



then a Divine and Supernatural Cause.

And this difference was so much greater under the Law, as the ordinary gifts were there less liberally bestow'd, and the vertues which they produc'd were more obscure and less frequent then they are now : and on the contrary, the extraordinary and miraculous gifts were then more common and agreed better with the genius of that Dispensation, in that it did prevail upon the minds of men, not so much by the knowledge of the truth, as this doth now, as by the admiration of the power of God, and by the astonishment which those surprising and prodigious passages did produce.

From hence, for a third consideration, results the knowledge of the manner how this promise of *Joel*, and such like, were to be fulfill'd,

110 *A Discourse concerning*

fill'd, for it was very agreeable to the truth, that at the beginning of Christianity our Saviour should plentifully bestow upon his Church those miraculous gifts, which were there especially design'd. And two reasons among others invited him thereunto:

The one, that the expressions which the Prophets had made use of, had fill'd the minds of men with expectation of these gifts: which expectation of theirs, if it had been frustrated in this respect, it would have given an occasion of scandal; therefore that men might not have any thing to object about the accomplishment of those promises, God was willing to signalize the beginning of the Preaching of the Gospel by those marvellous instances.

The other, which is the Principal, is, that the first establishment  
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of the Gospel had need of such a manifestation of the Spirit by the gift of miracles; because otherwise it could never have destroy'd the dominion of Satan, as it did, and have vanquish'd the resistance it met with in the *Roman* Empire, and in all other nations of the earth: for the Preaching of the Gospel, the working of miracles the distribution of the miraculous gifts of the Spirit have been the wings upon which the Church hath been carried through all the Nations of the World. Therefore the Apostle joyns these two together in the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, when he says, *That salvation being first begun to be Preach'd by our Lord, it hath been confirmed to us, by those who heard it; God besides bearing witness by signs and miracles and divers powers and distributions of the spirit according to his pleasure.* But when the Gospel was once well planted in the world, so that the  
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Preaching thereof alone was sufficient to preserve and continue it, the necessity of miracles being now ceased, the use of them ceased likewise, and these extraordinary gifts of the Spirit therefore disappear'd, because they were no longer necessary; thus the performance of this promise of *Joel*, as far as it was to be extended to all the times of the Christian Church, even to the consummation of the world, hath been restrain'd to the ordinary gifts of the Spirit of Faith, of Consolation, of Sanctification, which are indeed much more plentifully poured out under this dispensation of the Gospel, then ever they were under that of the Law.

To come therefore to a particular solution of this question, I think, we ought carefully to distinguish betwixt Divine, Angelical and Natural Dreams: for as  
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for those Divine Dreams; which are design'd to foretel things to come under the Emblem of an Allegorical Representation, or to convey some new commands to men in order to some great and extraordinary design, for which there is need of Divine Authority for the undertaking and executing of it: I conceive that time is now wholly expir'd, and those who pretend to and boast of any such, they are either impostors, who would abuse the world by their feigned visions, to serve their own private interest; or else fools, who have their brains disturb'd by Hypochondriack vapours: for we are no longer now under the legal dispensation, which was, as it were, the proper place for such things, nor under the Infancy of the Church, where such were necessary for its establishment. And if I may here speak my own thoughts of a certain kind of people

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114 *A Discourse concerning*

ple of both Sexes, who both in *Poland* and *Germany* have pretended to Divine visions in these latter days; I will not accuse them of imposture, for that they have given sufficient testimony of their Piety; but I dare be bold to say, that in their actions they had some transport of the understanding, which proceeded from some other cause than what was truly Divine. They were persons who partly out of devotion, partly out of great curiosity, did extraordinarily give themselves to the reading of the *Apocalypse* and the other *Prophecies*: the constancy they us'd herein, and the great affection they did it with, imprinted in their memories the *Idea's* of those things they there saw; and the Copies of those fair tables, where future events were represented, having given a tincture to their Spirits, two or three things have hereupon superven'd, which have con-



contributed to their perswasion, that their very dreams and the things they imagin'd they saw in their extasies, they sometimes fell into, were real and Divine visions.

First, they suffer'd themselves to be carried away by the hopes of those, who expect in due time a great prosperity of the Church of God on earth, and a terrible subversion of all those States and Powers, which now oppose the establishing the kingdom of Christ, and since they desir'd this with a great deal of zeal and passion, they hereupon easily imagin'd it to be certain and indubitable. For on the one hand divers Texts of Scripture have some seeming appearance of some such promises made to the Church of Christ: and on the other hand, it is one of the frailties of Humane Nature easily to believe what we desire

116 *A Discourse concerning*

should be true. Besides the melancholy humour, which was naturally predominant in them, the afflictions, hardships and anxieties they underwent, as well from the publick affairs, which did not go well to their satisfaction, as from their own private concerns, which did not much more please them, all these concurring together, made them very ready to receive all impressions of phansy, which might shew them either any hope of deliverance, or of any mitigation of their troubles.

To conclude, their bodies were so affected with the passions of their souls and with the quality of the humours, which were predominant in them, that they fell into some black melancholy indispositions, which all the world knows to be capable of very strange accidents. Be it then, that they either meerly dream'd, or that waking

king they were surpris'd with some transport of phanſy, in which their ſoul was perfectly abſtracted and ſeparated from their body, and from all commerce with the ſenſes (for that doth ſometimes happen in Hypochondriack diſtempers) theſe *Apocalyptical Images* were thus put into a violent motion, and fram'd in their imaginations theſe pretended viſions, which they have ſince related to us. To which might be added the operation of ſome evil Angels, who ſeek all imaginable occasions to deceive both the ſound and the ſick, and who help'd to joyn together and to paint theſe representations in the brains of thoſe poor people: And we have ſeen in a great part by experience, that thoſe images, which they ſaw in their pretended Enthuſiaſms, did either ſignifie nothing at all, or if they did, yet their vanity and falſeneſs have been confuted by the events.



As for those people beyond the Sea, which now boast of Visions, Revelations, Divine Inspirations, the extraordinary gifts of the holy Spirit, of extasies, and strange transportations; who by their *tremblings* and *quakings* would represent the motions of the Enthusiasts and Prophets; I should very much wonder if honest and understanding men should favour their frenzies: The Spirit of Christ is a Spirit of understanding and prudence, and of sober and well settled sense, and not a smog which fills empty brains with dark and phantastick imaginations; the grace of the Gospel puts the faculties of the soul into a grave and sober constitution, which gives both joy within to it self, and edification to others without, and doth not expose the true Religion to the laughter of its enemies and to the scandal of sober and intelligent men, by its indecent and unnatural motions.

As

As for those dreams which may proceed meerly from the impression and operation of Angels, I will not deny but that there may be yet some examples of that nature to be seen; for as for evil Angels, they may concern themselves in those illusions which happen to men sleeping, whether it be to imprint upon them some false opinions in matters of Religion, and to incline them to Superstition; or thus more to excite and inflame their passions, and to put them into more disorder. And as for good ones, although the dispensation of the Law, under which they were more especially employ'd in things relating to Religion, be now pass'd; yet they still continue to be Ministers and Instruments of Divine Providence in what relates to civil life, and humane society, and especially the protection of the faithful and the defense of the Church

120 *A Discourse concerning*

of Christ. And as then it is not impossible, but that they may sometimes appear to men waking, so is it not incredible, but that God may make use of them, from time to time to convey the notices of some things by dreams; there are many examples of both kinds in the books of those who have made collections of such memorable instances; to which I shall refer the Reader. I have heard the late Monsieur *Cameron*; a Person whose memory will be ever blessed in our Churches, say, that he had from the mouth of Monsieur *Calignon*, Chancellor of *Navarre*, a man of singular vertue, a memorable passage that befel him in *Bearne*: He went into a certain Town in the Country, either for diversion, or for some reason, relating to his health; for he did not acquaint me either with the place or the occasion of the journey; one night as he was asleep, he heard a voice which call'd him by his name, *Calignon*; here.



hereupon waking and hearing no more of it, he imagin'd that he had dream'd, and fell asleep again; a little after he heard the same voice, calling him in the same manner, which made a greater impression upon him, then before; so that being awaken'd he call'd his wife, who was with him, and told her what had happen'd, so that they both lay waking for some time, expecting whether they might hear the voice again, and whether it would say any thing more to them; At last the voice awaken'd him the third time, calling him by his name, and advis'd him to retire presently out of the Town, and to remove his family, for that the plague would rage horribly in that place within few days; to which he added, that it was very well that he followed this direction, for as much as within few days after the plague began in the Town, and destroy'd a great number of people.

This

This was certainly an Angel that spake to him, who by the favourable and benign providence of God drew him out of that danger, which otherwise had been unavoidable. For whether the plague came by the infection of the air, or by the Communication of some infectious persons, or whether some Sorcerers and Witches (as they say, they sometimes do) had resolv'd to diffuse their infectious poisons in that place, it was that which did not exceed the knowledge of an Angel. Now if these blessed Spirits, which are appointed as a guard to pious men in obedience to Gods Command, do sometimes by speaking give them such advertisements, they also by the same command may convey the same notices to them by dreams. The history of the last age doth so fully attest the truth of that of Lewis of Bourbon, Prince of Conde, that we cannot reasonably doubt thereof.

A little before his journey from *Dreux*, he dream'd that he had fought three battels, successively one after another, wherein he had got the victory, and where his three great Enemies were slain. But that at last he also was mortally wounded, and that after they were laid one upon another, he also was laid upon their dead bodies. The event was remarkable: for the Marechal de *S<sup>t</sup> André* was kill'd at *Dreux*, the Duke of *Guise*, *Francis* of *Lorraine*, at *Orleans*, the Connestable of *Montmorency* at *S<sup>t</sup> Dennis*, and this was the Triumvirate, which, they say, had sworn the ruine of those of the Religion, and the destruction of that Prince. At last, he himself was slain at *Bassac*, as if there had been a continuation of deaths and Funerals.

Although there were some Circumstances in the dream which did not



124 *A Discourse concerning*

not exactly agree with their accomplishment, as that he imagined that his Enemies died in three battels; for the Duke of *Guise* died otherwise, being assassinated by *Poltrót*, and that he conceiv'd in his dream, that he always came off victorious, for he himself was taken at *Dreux*, and the glory of the victory at *S<sup>t</sup> Dennis* was disputed, and 'tis believ'd, that at *Bassac*, he did not only lose his life, but the Battel too. Yet notwithstanding upon the whole, this vision did not cease to be very admirable, and it hath been looked upon as such by reason of the greatness of the events: But there might be something natural in it, in respect of the formation of the images in the phansie of the Prince. For he having the temperature of a Lion, and being brought up in War, and Commanding an Army, might easily dream of Battels, the evening before

before so great a Combat. And he himself seem'd sufficiently to acknowledge this when repeating the dream he us'd this Preface ; *I know very well that we must not give any credit to dreams, but yet I must relate to you what I dream'd last night,* and in truth one who thus speaks sufficiently testifies, on the one side, that his dream appear'd to him extraordinary, and that it had made a great impression upon his mind : and on the other, that he did not look upon it as absolutely supernatural, seeing he somewhat doubted whether he should make any relation of it : But nevertheless, an Angel, to whom God had given some little foresight of the success of these Civil Wars, and of the end of these Captains, might very well concern himself herein by his permission, with design to give the Prince some advertisement ; for he might draw this advantage from hence, either  
not

126 *A Discourse concerning*

not to continue the War any longer if he had a mind to escape death, or seriously to prepare himself, as he should see his enemies to depart this life: and both these things were worthy of a good Angel, who had a care of the life of this great Prince and also of his Salvation. There are also several memorable things of such who were saved from the Massacre, by the advertisement of dreams, which if true, as I see no reasonable cause to doubt of them, they could proceed from nothing else, but Angels; as the truth of the things, and the punctual accomplishment did sufficiently evidence.

But my intention here is not to report histories, but to make Theological and Rational Reflexions upon this matter. And the conclusion I draw hence is, that God has not now tied his hands; but that he may still give such notices  
to



to men, although this be done very rarely : However we may here make this observation, that as, when the question is concerning such miracles as may be done by the Ministry of Angels (for every one knows that there are some, which cannot be done but only by the power of God) we ought carefully to examine whether they be done by good or bad ones, that so we suffer not our selves to be abused by the seducement of lies and error; so here there is need of a great circumspection, to judge of these nocturnal visions. All the actions of men are either good in themselves, or evil in their own nature, or indifferent and intermediate betwixt these; if then any such dream induce us to a good action, and from whence there can follow no bad event, such a dream ought not to be suspected by us, but if it incline us to any evil, we ought absolutely

lutely to condemn and reject it, as a delusion of the Devil; and as for indifferent actions, the circumstances, that accompany them, usually determining their nature, I would here rather be guided by Prudence and Charity, which are the general Rules of our conversation, than by the inducement and perswasion of dreams. And nevertheless where Prudence and Charity should both agree with an extraordinary vision, I do declare that such an inducement to me would be very considerable.

Lastly, as for dreams that proceed from natural causes. I suppose that where I have spoken of their causes from whence they proceed, I have sufficiently discover'd their vanity. It is certainly a great weakness of mind or a superstition very unworthy of Christians in the least to rely on them,

them, either for the conjecturing of that which is come, or for founding our resolutions of least importance upon them. I shall only here give two advertisements, the one whereof respects the health of the Body, the other the safety of the Soul. First, then we ought to have a regard to our dreams, when they may furnish us with some indications concerning the constitution of our own bodies; that if they mark out any fault in our tempers, or any disorder in the humours of our body, and so threaten us with some disease or sickness, that then we may provide against it by the Course of Physick.

As for the second, if the frequency of certain dreams, and their evil quality, do inform us that we are inclin'd to some vicious passions (although this may be better known by our actions



130 *A Discourse concerning*

waking, then by our dreams) that we then endeavour to correct them by Christian Morality, Lastly, since as Philosophers have observ'd, the quality of dreams is a sign and token not only of the constitution of our bodies, but also of our minds, that the most vertuous have always the most sober and temperate dreams, every one therefore ought carefully, to give himself to the exercise of Vertue, Temperance and Sobriety, that so he be not importun'd and molested with turbulent imaginations.

Thus, most Honoured Brother, you have the results of my thoughts when at certain spare hours in my journey I set my self to meditate on this subject: if other Affairs had not deny'd me further leisure, and if I had not been upon other designs, which I both promised, and which have been  
long

long expected from me, I had bestow'd more care and study in this little Work. All that I was able to do, was to finish it, which I partly doubted whether I could or no, when I first set Pen to Paper: Such as it is, I heartily present it to you, and shall esteem it happy, if it receive your Approbation; for as much as that which you receive from the publick ought to render your testimony beyond exception. Sir, I beg the assistance of your good Prayers to God for me, not only that he would give me grace and strength to finish, what he hath put into my mind to undertake, for the clearing of his truth, but principally that, notwithstanding the many hindrances I meet withal, he would strengthen me with his good Spirit, that I may finish my course to his glory, and the edification of his people. And I also do heartily pray, that he would

232 *A Discourse concerning, &c.*

heap upon you the choicest of his  
blessings, and am assuredly,

Most Honoured Brother,

*Your most Humble and most*

*Obedient Servant,*

**Amyraut.**

*Samuel, the first*  
*of the year:*  
*1659.*

8 N059



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THE  
CONTENTS.

---

THE Introduction. Page 1.

CHAP. I.

*Of Natural Dreams and their several Causes.* Pag. 3.

CHAP. II.

*Of Angelical Dreams in General, and some rational reflexions on Particular ones.* Pag. 19.

CHAP. III.

*Of Divine Dreams.* Pag. 39.

CHAP.

## CHAP. IV.

*The Characters by which they might know that those Dreams were truly Divine, and not vain Delusions.*

Pag. 53.

## CHAP. V.

*Whether God doth make use of this kind of Revelation by Dreams, now under the Dispensation of the Gospel.*

Pag. 101.

8 N059

S I N I S

CHAP. III.

Pag. 32.

CHAP.

